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ANALECTA.
OR,
FRAGMENTS
Offered (upon Occasion)
AS A
SUPPLEMENT
TO A
Discourse of the Covenants,

(Printed with this Title
[*Good Will towards Men*] An. 1675.)

ALSO
Sixty QUERIES proposed to such as deny the
Evangelical Law, and Gospel-Terms.

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Christ the Mediator of a better Covenant.

HEB. viii. 6.

But now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises.

THE principal Scope and Design of this Divine Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is to shew the *Excellency* of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that in his *Prophetical* Office, as a greater Prophet than *Moses*; and in his *Priestly* Office, as a greater High Priest than *Aaron*, and all those Priests of the *Levitical* Order, not wholly Excluding, but Including his *Kingly* Office. As *Melchisedec*, who was both King and Priest, was an eminent Type of him, of an higher Order than the Order of *Aaron*, (*Chap. 7.*) Christ was to bear the Glory of both Crowns, *as a Priest upon his Throne*, *Zach. 6. 13.* Which things are clear'd and prov'd at large, to confirm Christians in the Faith of Christ, and to excite them unto a Course of Life and Practice futable thereunto. As in part of the tenth Chapter, to the end of the Epistle.

The Text shews the *Excellency* of Christ, *as Mediator*, a greater, more worthy Mediator than *Moses* or *Aaron*; *Mediator of a better Covenant*, a Covenant *established upon better Promises.*

Here I would premise a few things concerning the Covenants made with Man.

1. There was a *Law* given, and *Covenant* made with *Man in Innocency*, requiring of him perfect personal Obedience, promising Life and Happiness on those Terms, and threatening Death if he Sinned. This is called by some, *The Covenant of Nature*, by others, *The Covenant of Works*.

Now as that first Covenant was little sooner made, then broken on Man's part, Mankind had been quite Lost. we Sinners had been *remedilessly*

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dilestly Miserable (as the fallen Angels) had God held us to that Covenant. As the World of Mankind is fallen from God, and *become Guilty before God*, and so liable to Condemnation; 'tis *absolutely impossible* that any of Mankind should attain to Life and Happiness by *that first Covenant*, the Condition whereof is no less then *perfect Innocency*, and *sinless Obedience*; and this Personal, that is, necessarily requir'd of every individual Person, who would Claim by that Covenant.

2. Seeing we are all *Sinners, fallen short of the Glory of God*, and under Sentence of Death and Condemnation, according to the tenor of the Law or Covenant given to Man in Innocency, it will follow, that if any of Mankind are Saved, it must be by a *Law or Covenant of Grace*, that gives, grants, and conveys a Right to Pardon and Life, upon other and lower Terms then what the first Covenant required.

3. As there was *no need of a Mediator* in that First Covenant with Man in Innocency (as there had been *no falling out* betwixt God and Man) so that Covenant did not include a Mediator. To say, that this was the Sense and Meaning of that Covenant made with *Adam*, [Obey thou perfectly, or if thou Sinnest, a Mediator shall yield perfect Obedience, and also suffer, to satisfy for thy Disobedience, or thou shalt Die]. This would imply, That *Adam* had knowledge of a Mediator provided, if he Sinned, before he Sinned, without any Scripture Proof or Reason. Again, would it not follow, that the Covenant was not broken by *Adam's* Disobedience, supposing the Mediator to perform his part? Suppose a Law or Covenant to run in this Form, [Thou shalt do thus, or another shall do thus, and so for thee]; The Law or Covenant is not broken, if either Party perform his part, whereby the other Party is freed from any Obligation. And further, would it not also follow, that if a Mediator was included in that Covenant, the *Covenant of Nature* was the same in effect with the *Covenant of Grace*? But perfect personal Obedience being the thing required of Man in that Covenant, which threatned Death upon his Disobedience; It appears to be the *free Act of God*, as above his own Law, to appoint, ordain, and provide a Mediator; for whose most satisfactory and meritorious Righteousness, and Obedience, he hath promised to Save penitent and believing Sinners, to the Glory of his Grace and Mercy, without any detracting from the Honour of his Justice, or his righteous Law and Government.

4. The Lord was pleased (after Man's Fall) to *Enact*, and *make a Law and Covenant of Grace* with *Adam*; so likewise with *Noah*, and with *Abraham*, &c. respecting the *Messiah to come*: By which (for the promised *Messiah's* sake) all the Faithful of old were saved. *Heb. 11. 4, 5. By Faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice then Cain ---. By Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see Death ---. For he had this Testimony, that he pleased God. And ver. 7. Noah became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith.*

5. Besides that more *general Law, and Covenant of Grace*, the Lord (by *Moses*) established a *Covenant of Peculiarity* with the People of the *Jews*. At the Institution of Circumcision it was *promised unto Abraham* concerning his Seed; and afterwards performed, when the Lord having brought them out of *Egypt*, took them as a *peculiar People* to himself, to Rule them as a *Theocracy* by his own Laws, which he gave them by *Moses*. Here Note,

1. That *Mosaical Law or Covenant* was the very *Political Law* of the *Jews*, whereby they were to be Ruled and Governed, as a Political Body. And thus it was their *peculiar Privilege* and Honour (wherein they were, distinguished from, and preferr'd above all other Nations) that they received the *Law of their Land* from God himself, as their Law-giver, their Judge, and King, in a special manner; and thus were a People under his special Government. Deut. 4. 8. *What Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this Law which I set before you this day?* Psal. 146. 19, 20. Rom. 3. 1, 2.

2. The *Mosaical Law and Covenant* (as ordained and given them by God) was not to be taken by it self, but as *Conjunct* with the Promise of the *Messiah*, and the *Covenant of Grace* made with *Abraham*, which was as the *Soul* of it, and unto which it was an *Appendix*.

3. Yea, the *Design of the Mosaical Law* was so far from crossing the Promise or *Covenant of Grace* that was before it, or from obstructing the entertainment of that fuller Discovery of Grace that was to follow, that it was *subservient* to it, and fitted to prepare Men for a due, ready Reception of it. As it was a means to bring Men to a sight and sense of their Sin and Guilt, and so of their being obnoxious to God's Wrath and Curse, so to drive them out of themselves to Christ. And the *Ceremonial Law* was a *Typical Gospel*, pointing at Christ, as the Shadow hath reference to the Body and Substance: See Gal. 3. 19, 21, 23, 24. The *Law was our School-Master to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by Faith*.

4. But the carnal *Jews*, with their corrupt Teachers, had quite perverted the *Sense, Scope, and Design of the Mosaical Law and Covenant*, separating it from the Promise and *Covenant of Grace* that went before it, and of which it was an *Appendix*. They took *Mose's Law* to be so perfect as never to be *abrogated* or changed; and the *Works of the Law* to be so pleasing and acceptable to God, that they looked no further, but rested in those Works, as their *justifying Righteousness*. Thus they set *Moses against Christ*.

5. It seems plain, that it is the *Covenant of Peculiarity*, which was made with the Natural Seed of *Abraham*, and which the Carnal *Jews* so horribly perverted and abused; this (I say) is the *Law of Works*, spoken of, Rom. 3. 27. which is so called, as obliging them to such an *operous way* of Service, to such a multitude of external, costly, painful, burdensome Works; though it was far different from the *Law of Works* given to Man in Innocency. So again, it is here called the *First Covenant*,

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nant, (*Heb.* 8. 7. and *Ver.* 13.) the old Covenant: Not that it was the First or most ancient Covenant made with Man (for it was of a much later Date) but to *distinguish* it from the New Covenant, which was to succeed, to which it was to give place, the Covenant which God had promised to make with the *spiritual Seed* of Abraham (the Father of the Faithful) that is, believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*; See *Gal.* 3. 7, 8. Let these five brief Notes concerning that Covenant of Peculiarity made with the People of the *Jews*, suffice in this place.

6. The *Evangelical Covenant*, or the Covenant of Grace of the *last Edition*, which is *founded upon Christ's being come*, and his having performed all that was required of him here on Earth, as Mediator betwixt God and Man, having fulfilled the *special Law of Mediation* given him of the Father, or having performed his part of the *Covenant of Redemption*, I say, the Gospel-Covenant (founded thereupon) hath the *preheminence* of those former Dispensations of the Covenant, that had respect unto *Christ to come*. These things premised, I come to the Propositions contained in the latter part of the Verse, to which I purpose to confine my Discourse. Take the Propositions in the Order, as they lie in the Text.

Proposition 1. Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant.

2. This Covenant is a better Covenant.

3. It is a Covenant established.

4. It is a Covenant established with, or upon better Promises.

Doct. 1. The Lord Jesus Christ (our great High Priest) is the *Mediator of the New Covenant, the Gospel Covenant*. That this is the Covenant here spoken of, is evident from what follows, *Ver.* 8, 9, 10. where we find it set in *contra-distinction* to the old *Mosaical Covenant*.

A Covenant is betwixt two Parties at least; and *where there's no variance*, it is not a thing in use, that there should be a Mediator. So the Covenant betwixt God and Man in a state of Innocency, was without a Mediator. But God would not Covenant anew with sinful fallen Man, without a Mediator. Though Christ was not *actually exhibited* till many Ages after the Promise of Redemption and Salvation by him, yet it was by *virtue of his Mediation* that he was to undertake in the Fulness of Time, and from thence forward to go thorow with, that all the Faithful of old were Saved. There were *Typical Mediators* under the Old Testament, as *Moses*, *Dent.* 5. 5. *Gal.* 3. 19. he was an *Internunciatus*, an Interpreter, to declare and make known God's Will to his Federate People; and thus a *Type of Christ* in his *Prophetical Office*, *Acts* 3. 22. And the *Levitical Priests*, appointed by God to offer Sacrifices, and to intercede for the People, these were *Types of Christ* in his *Priestly Office*; yet they were but Types and Shadows of Christ, the true Mediator, of whom I am to Discourse, (tho' with what brevity I can). Here note,

(1.) Christ

(1.) Christ, the *Son of God Incarnate*, is indeed a Middle Person, God and Man in one Person; and upon this Account a fit Person to interpose betwixt God and Man; and none in all the World, but he, fit for this great Undertaking, *As he was a Man, so he was made under the Law, and suffered as in Mans stead. As he was God, so he was able to sustain his humane Nature under those Sufferings, that no meer Man could have born.* And further, it was the *infinite Dignity of his Person* that render'd his Obedience and Sufferings of such Value, as to be most satisfactory and meritorious for us.

(2.) Being a middle Person, God-man; so he undertook the Office of *Mediator* betwixt God and Man; when it was not possible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats should take away Sins: He saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldst not, but a Body hast thou prepared me: *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God, Heb. 10. 5. &c.* There was no mediating betwixt God and Sinners, *merely by way of Intercession, Perswasion, and Intreaty*: That would not have done without the Mediator's giving such *satisfaction* to God's offended Justice, as to make way for Sinners Reconciliation unto God, *without any wrong to his Justice, or Reproach and Dishonour to his Government.* A *Creditor* may forgive Debts owing to him; when a *Ruler*, a Governor may not pass by the violation of his Laws and Indignities offered to his Government, without requiring Satisfaction; But this would be *neglecting his Office*, and a foul blemish to his Government, exposing it to Contempt. Thus Christ must satisfy for Man's Sins, if he would be a Mediator betwixt God and sinful Man; and his *Satisfaction* is indeed the Ground and *Foundation of his Intercession.*

(3.) In Christ's undertaking the Office of a Mediator there is implied, and it is to be presupposed, that a *Law of Mediation* was given him, or a *Covenant of Redemption* must be granted betwixt God the Father and him, our Mediator and Redeemer: For he would never have taken this Office unto himself, without being called of God. Though some think it "Too bold, improper, and offensive a Phrase to call God's eternal Decree of Redemption, by the name of a Law, yea, or a Covenant of God with himself; that is, of the Father with the Son: And yet freely grant, "This Law and Covenant was made to and with Christ incarnate; for so he was a Subject under Law: And so all the Descriptions of it in the Old Testament are but Prophecies and Promises containing the Terms of the future Covenant (upon his Incarnation.) Yet this is out of Question, that he was Fore-ordained to be our Redeemer before the Foundation of the World, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19, 20. And accordingly when he came into the World upon that great Errand, he finished the Work which the Father appointed him to do here; he fulfilled all Righteousness, he gave his Soul an Offering for Sin, offered himself without Spot to God, to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to bring us to God, to bring many Sons to Glory.

See Mr. B's
End of
Controv.
p. 121.
J. B. Good
Will to
Men, p.
127, 128.

And

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And for this his most meritorious, mediatory Work and Service, *God hath highly exalted him*, and given him a Name above every Name, *Phil. 2. 7, 8, 9. All Power is given him in Heaven and Earth*, *Matth. 28. 18.* Thus he is in full Power and Authority to Rule, and to Judge the World by his Laws.

And the *Law or Covenant of Grace*, wherein Pardon and Life is promised to all penitent Believers is of his procuring. I hope, we shall not be found *false Witnesses* of Christ, when we preach Repentance and Remission of Sins in his Name unto all the Sinners, that hear us, *Luke 24. 47.* If Christ offers a *Conditional Pardon* to Sinners in general in the Gospel, I can discern no ground for any to question his having *purchased so much* for them, *as he offereth* to them. A conditional offer to all (as we find in the Gospel) necessarily implies a *Pardon purchased conditionally* for all those to whom it is offered.

Not but that Christ gave himself with a *special Intention* to purchase and procure more for that chosen number of Persons, who were given to him of the Father, infallibly to bring them into a state of Grace here, and to bring them on to Glory. And the Father promised that *he should see his Seed*, and that he should not only raise up the Tribes of *Jacob*, but also be a *Light to the Gentiles*, and his Salvation to the end of the Earth. In order to which the *Holy Spirit is his Agent*, to set in, and concur with the word of Reconciliation, and other appointed means to make the same effectual, to the Enlightning, Converting, Sanctifying, and Saving those Chosen ones, whom he had especially in his Eye, that not one of them should perish.

We must distinguish betwixt the *Covenant of Redemption* made with Christ, and the *Covenant of Grace* made with us, not confound these two, if we would not run into great Mistakes.

(4.) Upon consideration of Christ's fulfilling what was requir'd of him in the *Covenant of Redemption*, is founded the *Covenant of Grace*, wherein Christ with his most precious saving Benefits, is promised unto Sinners, upon gracious Terms; and this is the Covenant whereof he is the Mediator. As here in the Text, and *Heb. 9. 15.* and *Chap. 12. 24.* He is the *Mediator of the New Covenant*, this better Covenant.

In the next place I shall shew, how he is so.

1. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, the Gospel-Covenant, as the *chief promulgator* of it: The Socinians will grant so much, and we may not deny it. As *Moses* was *Mediator* of the Old Covenant; *Deut. 5. 5. I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the Word of the Lord.* And Christ is called the *Messenger of the Covenant*, *Mal. 3. 1.* And the *Apostle* (as the High Priest) of *our Profession*, *Heb. 3. 1.* He, the Prince of the Apostles, a Legate sent from Heaven, *Heb. 2. 3.*

(2.) As he was the prime Promulger and Publisher of the Gospel and New Covenant, so the *sole Purchaser* of all Covenant Benefits and Blessings

Blessings for his People. All spiritual Blessings are in and from Christ, merited by him for such as believe in him, *Ephes. 1. 3.* As Justification, they are *justified by his Blood, Rom. 5. 9.* Reconciliation with God; *Reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, Rom. 5. 10.* Adoption; Christ was made under the Law, *to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 4. 5.* The indwelling, sanctifying Spirit; for which compare *Tit. 3. 5, 6.* with *John 14. 16, 17.* Christ prays for no more than what he purchased. And to mention no more here, *Eternal Life, Rom. 5. 21.* Thus Christ is Mediator of the New Covenant, having purchased Covenant Benefits.

(3.) He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, as it was *constituted* and *enacted* by him, or not without him. There was a full Concurrency and *Agreement* betwixt the Father and his Son Christ, *as to the Tenor and Terms* of the Covenant; that is, how, in what Way and Order, upon what Terms Sinners should come to an Interest in, and partake of what he purchased by his Satisfaction and Merits. Thus *the Law and Covenant of Grace*, as it was of his own procuring, it was put into his Hands: That it is the *Law of Christ*, as it is also *his Testament.*

(4.) And as his Hand was in the drawing up, and constituting of the New Covenant, so likewise he has *firmly sealed* it. As by his Divine Miracles, so by his Bloody Passion. After his preaching the Gospel, he *took his Death upon* it, to bear Witness to it. His Blood is called the *Blood of the Covenant*, *Heb. 10. 29.* It was the *Price* or *Purchase* of the New Covenant, together with its Blessings, and the *Seal* to ratify it. And the Sacraments which Christ hath instituted, *viz. Baptism*, and *the Lord's Supper*, are *Seals* to confirm the Covenant. *1 Cor. 11. 25. This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood.*

(5.) He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, as he is the *great Sponsor* or *Undertaker* for God's *Elect*, that they shall certainly (by his Spirit and Grace) perform the Terms of the Covenant, that they shall not fall short of that Life and Salvation which he hath purchased, and which is promised in the Covenant upon such Terms: He *gives Repentance*, *Acts 5. 31.* And so we read, that *Faith is given in the behalf of Christ*, *Phil. 1. 29.* And it is by him that they are *preserved in Grace* unto eternal Life, *John 17. 2.* Epistle of *Jude ver. 1.*

(6.) He is so the Mediator that he is *the Surety* of this better Covenant. *Heb. 7. 22. Surety of a better Testament, or Covenant:* Tho' we shall never find him called, *Sinners Surety*, or *Surety of the Covenant of Works*; but of a better Covenant. He was not bound in one and the same Bond with us; nor did he *suffer in the Person of Sinners*, but *in the Person of a Mediator.* Though he suffered in our stead so far, that we (believing in him) might be freed from Condemnation, that God's Justice being satisfied by his Suffering for our Sins, we might obtain Pardon and Reconciliation with God, upon the Terms stated in the Covenant. And Christ's Sufferings were of infinitely greater Value

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(in regard of the infinite Dignity of his Person) and God's Justice better satisfied therewith, than if all the Sinners in the World had suffered to Eternity. But we may not entertain such a Thought, as if Christ did so *represent us*, that we satisfied Divine Justice in Christ, as our Surety: A most unsound and dangerous Opinion (as it were easy to shew, and others have fully proved). Were it so, that we satisfied God's Justice in Christ, as our Surety, then the *Forgiveness of Sins* should be no Article of our Creed. As much as the Grace of God is to be magnified in the Pardon of Sin (as the Gospel proclaims it so oft, as would be an hard Task for one to number the Texts) according to that Opinion, Men should deny that there is any such thing. As a Creditor cannot be said to remit his Debt, or any part of it to me, when my Surety or Bondsman pays the whole Debt for me, that in the Construction of the Law I have satisfied my Creditor by my Surety.

But Christ is Surety of the better Covenant; so he is on God's part: So all the Promises of God in him are Yea, and in him, Amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20. As he is also Surety on his People's part, that they shall accept of, and hold to the Terms of the Covenant.

(7.) He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, as he *mediateth*, *intercedeth* with God for his People, according to what he hath purchased for them, and God hath promised. Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.* And he is a righteous Advocate, and hath a just Cause to plead, even though his Clients are sinful and unworthy. Such is his Righteousness, Satisfaction, and Merit, as can make our Cause good, if we come unto God by him.

USE 1. For Instruction. 1. See what Cause there is for Man to be Humbled and Ashamed. Man, that has broken Covenant with God, and thus unworthy to be taken into Covenant any more; as God would not Covenant with him again, *without a Mediator*. He putteth no Trust in his Saints (as I may allude to that Expression, Job 15. 15.) much less would he trust such as we are: And how groundless for any of us to be Confident in our selves! So what Cause have we to be humbled, to think of that sad Breach Sin hath made betwixt us and our God! Were it not for that, there had been no need of a Mediator.

2. Then what cause to Bless and Praise the Name of the Lord, for the *Covenant of Redemption*? Though that Covenant was made with Christ, not with us; not as if we were to satisfy God's Justice in him, or as if he was to *satisfy in our Legal Person* (for if so, then all pardoning Grace is excluded, as was said before.) Yet the *Covenant of Redemption* was made with Christ for us, for our Sake, our Benefit. And his satisfying Divine Justice, *in the Person of a Mediator*, was as much to our Benefit, as if we our selves had given a Ransome for our own Discharge. By Christ's *fulfilling the Articles* of that Covenant (where-

in he had to do with God's strict Justice) he became the *Mediator of the Covenant of Grace* made with us. As we read of the *Covenant confirmed of God in Christ*, Gal. 3. 17. He is indeed the Procurer, and the Substance, and the Mediator of it.

3. Then see what cause there is to admire and extol the Grace of God in his providing this Mediator of the Covenant for us. Here, (1.) How wonderful, that the Great God (he being the Party offended) should any more *condescend to Covenant with such vile Creatures*, so degenerated, who had Apostatized from their Maker! He is infinitely, originally, independently Happy in himself. All the Services, the highest Praises of Men and Angels cannot add any thing to his infinite, essential, immutable Perfection and Blessedness: The Righteousness of Creatures cannot profit him, nor can the Creatures Wickedness hurt him. And if all Mankind had perished for ever, without Remedy, had he been a Loser? Might he not have glorified his Justice in our everlasting Condemnation, as in the Condemnation of the Fallen Angels? (2.) Then how wonderful, that he should concern himself so far in the Work of our Reconciliation and Salvation, as to appoint and *provide a Mediator and Redeemer* for us? When (if it had been left to us) it had been utterly *impossible for us to have found out* any fit Mediator in all the World, who would, or durst have interpos'd betwixt an infinite offended, incensed Majesty, and us guilty Wretches. (3.) Then is not this the *Wonder of Wonders*, most wonderful, that he should manifest such Compassion towards us (such ill-deserving Creatures) that rather than we should perish without Remedy, he would *appoint his own, and only Son* unto, and employ him in the great work of a Mediator? A work that must *cost him so dear*, as to satisfy for all our Sins, to interpose betwixt us Sinners and his Fathers offended Justice, for the dreadful stroke to fall on him, to keep it from us: He bare the Punishment that was due to us. Mr. Flavel * hath a Pathetic Story, to illustrate the matter in hand: A poor Family being ready to perish (in the time of a Famine in Germany) the Husband makes a Motion, that one of the four Children they had, should be sold for Bread, to keep the rest of them alive; to which the Wife consents: But when they were to determine which of their four Sons they should part with, they could by no means think of parting with the Eldest for this Reason, nor the Second for another Reason, nor the Third for another Reason, nor the Youngest, he was their *Benjamin*. Thus when it came to the point, they could not for their Lives consent to part with any of their four Children. But God gave his own Son, his only begotten Son, he spared him not, but gave him up as a Sacrifice for us, thus to be our Mediator and Redeemer, that we might live through him. (4.) And how wonderful, that he should do this for such graceless Prodigals as we, who were far from seeking unto him, were saying in our Hearts and Lives, *We will come no more unto thee*. When Sinners were at such a pass, not only far from deser-

* *Fountain of Life*, p. 35, 36. (40.)

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ving but far from so much as desiring a Mediator to bring us to God.

4. Again, what cause (in like manner) to admire and extol the *Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in undertaking the Office of a Mediator. Nothing could have been done in that great important Business of constituting him Mediator, *without his own free and full Consent*. And here, (1.) Let it be consider'd who he is, The eternal Son of God, Co-essential, Co-equal with the Father: As he could say, *I, and my Father are one*. And thus, *over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. Certainly, he had no need of us, but had been for ever infinitely happy in himself (with the Father, and the Holy Spirit) though he had left us all in a lost Estate for ever, to be for ever Miserable. (2.) And who, and what we were. How wonderful strange, that he should be at all concern'd for our Recovery? He undertook the Office of a Mediator, and obliged himself to perform that Office, in Compassion towards us, when we were *Ungodly, when Sinners*, and when *Enemies*, Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10. (3.) And then what it was he did, and suffered as Mediator; even more than can be express'd or conceiv'd. How wonderful that he, who was his Fathers Delight from Eternity, *rejoycing always before him*, that he should become a *Man of Sorrows*, and *acquainted with Grief* for our sakes! That he, who being in the Form of God, thought it no *Robbery to be equal with God*, that he yet made himself of *no Reputation*, taking upon him the *Form of a Servant*, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross; and all this for such as were Enemies: For when we were Enemies we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. What created Understanding, but must in its largest Conceptions fall short of the depth of his Humiliation, and the extremity of his Sufferings, which he willingly submitted unto in his unparallel'd astonishing love to us. 2 Cor. 8. 9. *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho' he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his Poverty might be rich*. So tho' he was the *Prince of Life*, yet for our sakes he *stooped to the Death of the Cross*, that we might live through him. And tho' he knew how he should be wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities, yet he declined not the Office of Mediator.

USE 2. Exhortation. 1. Rest not without an Interest in Christ the Mediator, and in the Fruits and Benefits of his Mediatorship.

Object. Some may say here, Is not Christ our Mediator? 1 Tim. 2: 5. *There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus*.

Ans. True: There is this Mediator provided, appointed by God, and *graciously offer'd* in the Gospel; yet if he be not accepted of us, as well as offer'd, and as he is offer'd in the Gospel, we shall have no saving Benefit of his Mediatorship: In effect, and in the Event, he will be no Mediator for us. O Sirs, you have this *Mediator offered*, but I must

must tell you, *he is not yours to the saving Intents and Purposes of that Office, if not accepted.* And I must say this further, It had been *better* for any of us that *there had been no Mediator provided*, but that we had been left to perish under our violation of the first Covenant God made with Man; or *better that we had never heard of Christ*, the Mediator, than after this, to be found such as never regarded, but made light of him, our Condemnation and future Punishment will be sorer, if we refuse, or will not look after him. 'Tis *the Misery* of the fallen Angels, that they *have no Mediator*; but it will *aggravate our Sin and Misery* in some respect, above that even of the Devils themselves, if after all the Gospel-offers we have of a Mediator, we should continue to *reject, and will none of him.*

Further to perswade Sinners to look after an Interest in Christ, the Mediator. (1.) Consider seriously, there is *no coming to God for Sinners, but through a Mediator*: He would be a consuming Fire to such as we are, if we have not Christ our Mediator. There were no hope to have God *our Sun and Shield*; no, he would be to us *a consuming Fire*; no seeing God's Face without a Mediator; and there is no other Mediator to be thought of, none other for our Turn. So, (2.) Consider what *a fit and all-sufficient Mediator* Christ is; one of *God's own choosing*, and one that is most near and dear to him; his dear Son, who upon that account hath the greatest Interest in him. Psal. 2. 7, 8. He hath *actually performed* all that was required of him here, has gone thorough with his Work here on Earth, and is now *at God's Right-hand* in Heaven, to *plead his Satisfaction and Merits*, and to *convey* the blessed Fruits of his Purchase unto all those, for whom he appears in the Presence of God. Thus he is able to save them to the uttermost, who have him for their Mediator. (3.) And further consider, He is *most willing to be our Mediator*, if we have Hearts to accept of him: *Him that cometh to me* (says he) *I will in no wise cast out.* He cannot but be *good in his Office*; he is a most *merciful and faithful High Priest*, full of Compassion, even such a one as we have need of. How often that he would be gathering Sinners to himself, when (such is their Sin, Ingratitude, and Folly) they refuse to come! He may say of Multitudes that care not for him, tho' without him they perish for ever, [*I would, but ye would not*].

But as it concerns us above all things in the World, to have him for our Mediator, so let it be our Care to get a *deep sense of our absolute Need* of him, being soundly convinc'd of our sinful and miserable Estate by Nature. Oh, we are utterly lost without him, there is Salvation in no other: So let us *reject all other Mediators*, as Physicians of no Value; he is the only Mediator betwixt God and Men. So let us study Christ more, to know what a Mediator he is; and so *accept of him on his own Terms*, even the Terms of the Covenant, whereof he is the Mediator. Some would have the *Covenant of Grace only made with Christ*, not with us; as they deny any Terms requir'd of us. Now
how

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how can this be right and sound? Then how can we, any of us be said to be in Covenant? Can *we be in a Covenant that was never made with us?* How strange a thing were that? And then how is Christ *Mediator of the Covenant?* A *Mediator is not of one.* Is he his own Mediator, or is he our Mediator? If our Mediator, then are we not a Party in the Covenant, betwixt whom, and his Father, he Mediates? And when the Gospel saith [*Repent, that your Sins may be blotted out: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*] These are Gospel-terms, *not requir'd of Christ, but of us;* though we, none of us perform these Terms, without his Spirit and special Grace; which we must seek in the use of his appointed means; seek of him with serious Diligence, waiting on him, who waiteth that he may be gracious, who is *before hand with us,* in affording Means and Helps, both external and internal, that we have great Encouragement to conclude, If we set about our great Business in good earnest, *the Work should not stick at him.*

But as we would have an Interest in Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant, we must receive him, receive him as he is offer'd; that is, with all his Offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King; for so he is Mediator, and executes his Mediatorship in them all: And we cannot thus receive him, without giving up our selves to him. As Dr. Sibbs, Faith *gives, as well as takes away.* When we are his *indeed, not only by Right and Obligation* (as by Right he is Lord of all) *but by Choice and free Consent,* by real and sincere Self-resignation, then he is ours, and specially engaged for us.

2. And then let us own him, *make use of him,* imploy, improve him as *Mediator of the Covenant.* 'Tis pleasing to him, that they for whom he stands engag'd, *imploy him in his Office.* And he who was so *punctual in fulfilling* what was required of him in the *Covenant of Redemption,* even the hardest Terms thereof, and what none other could have born and gone thorow with (and that Covenant was betwixt God and the Son Incarnate only:) Certainly, he will be as *faithful in his Office and Trust, as Mediator of the Covenant of Grace.* Therefore,

(1.) You that have him engaged for you, *look to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant,* (as you did at your first coming to him, to set you in a justified State, so) to *procure your Pardon and Peace with God* after new failures. As (alas!) we are sinning daily, and sometimes fall into Sin, not of *mere Infirmary.* Now what course have we to take here, but (renewing our Repentance) to apply our selves by Faith to Christ, our *Advocate with the Father?* 1 John 2. 1. 'Tis he that must make our Peace with God, and also maintain it.

(2.) Look to Christ, Mediator, for all necessary Supplies of Grace: For his Spirit, Grace, and Help, whereby to subdue and mortify Corruption: There is no maintaining the *spiritual Combate without Christ strengthening us.* Have recourse to Christ for Grace to withstand and overcome

overcome Temptations. No overcoming the World, no overcoming the Wicked one, the Prince of this World, without his Help: But his Grace is sufficient for us. Make use of him in all the Duties you have to discharge; *do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus*. Keep a constant sense of your own Insufficiency, and earnestly call in his Assistance, in whom you have Righteousness and Strength.

(3.) Look to the Mediator of the Covenant for Support under, and the sanctifying of Afflictions, that you may find by Experience they are *Covenant-Dispensations*. We shall be sinking, desponding, dispirited, past doing any thing as we ought, under our Trials and Exercises, if left to our selves. But the Lord Jesus, who *suffered, being tempted*, knoweth how to *succour them that are tempted*: He hath taken on himself, and born the heaviest end of the Cross, to make his Peoples burden light: And we may bear the Cross lightly, having *Christ's helping hand*. The Apostle Paul could do all things, bear all things (the Abasures, Pressures and Necessities he met with) Christ strengthening him, *Phil. 4. 13*. But without looking to the Mediator, the *bright side of the Cloud* will be turned from us: And we shall rather fear that the Lord is punishing us in his Wrath, and hot Displeasure, then see any ground to hope that he chastizeth us in Love, that he afflicts us in very faithfulness.

(4.) Look to the Mediator of the Covenant to offer up your Prayers to God, and to procure the Acceptance of all your Services. To come to the *Throne of Grace*, and *not in Christ's Name*, and not to take the Mediator along with us is not the way to speed in our Suits, such Prayers are not like to find Audience. But the Angel and Mediator of the Covenant, he *hath much Incense to offer with the Prayers of all Saints*, *Rev. 8. 3*. And without that Incense perfuming our Prayers, *our breath would seem strange*, and be unpleasing to God. Our Cause is safe, having Christ our Advocate, making Intercession for us: And he is most ready to make Intercession for us, we coming unto God by him. We are *sure to speed, asking in his Name* (by Faith depending on his Merits, and ingaging him in his mediatory Office) *John 14. 13, 14. and Chap. 16. 13*. We have his Word, his Promise for it, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his Name, it shall be done: Understand, whatsoever is fit for us to ask, and good for us to have.

(5.) Look to Jesus, the Mediator of the Covenant for the Blessing of Gospel-Ordinances, as the Word preached, Sacraments, &c. He is *our Jacobs Ladder*; by him must our Souls be raised and advanced towards God, towards Heaven; and *by him* it is that any *spiritual Blessings descend* on our Souls. As he is the meritorious procuring Cause of all Covenant-Blessings; so the *principal means of conveyance*, God gives them not to us immediately, but in and through his Son, our Mediator. *1 John 5. 11. 12*. *He that hath the Son hath Life*: And so the Grace, the Blessings that are necessary in order to that Life. The *Fruit of Ordinances* is from the sweet and gracious *Influence of Christ, the Son of Righteousness*.

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Righteousness. No Benefit, no spiritual Light, or quickening by the Word, but *as Christ speaks in it.* As the Apostle has an Expression, [Seeing ye seek a Proof of Christ's speaking in me—.] 'Tis the *Ministration of the Spirit*, through Christ the Mediator. So in the Lord's Supper we are in a special manner to look to Jesus, and to be dealing with him. How great things are there to be offer'd, set before us! Christ Crucified, a sacrificed Saviour, with those wonderful great Benefits purchased by that Sacrifice of himself; [*Take ye, eat ye, this is my Body, which is broken for you, &c.*] Again, there we have *Christ's Will and Testament*, or the New Covenant *Sealed and Confirmed* with those exceeding great and precious Promises therein contain'd, whereof the Promise of the Remission of Sins is a principal one. [*This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, shed for the Remission of Sins, &c.*] But the Blessing of the Ordinance comes from him, whose Death is there Represented and Commemorated. And how can we hope to find that Ordinance, the *Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, if there we are not looking unto him by Faith, yea, and laying hold on him? Both our Union and Communion with him here is by Faith.

(6.) Look to the Mediator, the Author and Finisher of Grace, to preserve you in Grace, to enable you to persevere. Surely, Christians, there were *less hope of our standing* (of our selves) in Grace, in regard of the remainders of Corruption in us; less hope by far, *than of Adam's standing in Innocency.* As one says, "A Child walking in slippery ways, trusteth more to the Hand that leadeth it, (*and holdeth it*) than " to its own Feet. So let it be with us.

(7.) Look to Jesus the Mediator, when you come to have Death in view, When Flesh and Heart are ready to fail, yet (Christian) let that support thy sinking Spirits, [*I know my Redeemer liveth.*] If I have given up my self to him, and am living on him, and living to him here; then when Death comes I should not fear committing my departing Soul into his Hands; as holy Stephen, Acts 7. 59. *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.*

So this truth, that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant, may yield strong Consolation to such as are in Christ. But I pass from this point.

Doct. 2. *The Gospel-Covenant (whereof Christ is Mediator) is a better Covenant: A better Covenant than that which went before.*

Here is *comparatio inaequalium*, setting forth as the Excellency of Christ our Mediator, above Moses and Aaron, so the Excellency of the Gospel-Covenant above the *Mosaical, Legal Covenant*: And these two illustrate one another. If we consider *how great an High Priest* Jesus Christ, the Son of God is, this casts a great Lustre on the Covenant, whereof he is the Mediator. Again, if we consider the Excellency of the Covenant which he hath procured for us, and ratified, confirmed, this
shews

shews him a most excellent High Priest and Mediator : The more noble the Effect, this shews and proves the Cause to be more noble ; as the Learned *Lawson*, " He that could lay the Foundation of such an * *on He-*
 " excellent Covenant, by satisfying Divine Justice, and as Surety, *brews, p.*
 " make it so valid, so effectual, and of eternal Continuance, must *140.*
 " needs be a more excellent Priest, in respect of his Ministration, which
 " had far more glorious Effects than the Ministration of the High
 " Priests under the Law.

Quest. 1. What Covenant this is, here called a better Covenant ?

Answ. The Gospel-Covenant, certainly ; as was noted before ; and this a Covenant betwixt God and Man : Not the Covenant of Redemption, betwixt God and Christ Incarnate ; where God is considered as one Party and Christ as the other Party, but not Mediator of that Covenant. Though he is Mediator of that Covenant with us, he could not be Mediator of that Covenant made with himself ; and there needs no Mediator of that Covenant betwixt the Father and his Son Christ. But in the Covenant betwixt God and fallen Man (whom Sin had set at variance) there was need of a Mediator : And so Christ fulfilling his part of the Covenant of Redemption, was fit indeed to be the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace made with us ; he, and none but he fit for it.

But when the Majesty of Heaven and Earth vouchsafes to make a Covenant with us, his Creatures and Vassals, we are to take notice and remember, that this is a Covenant betwixt the greatest unequals, as betwixt the highest and most absolute Sovereign, and his Liege-People : And thus we are without Controversy bound to accept of whatsoever Covenant the great God is pleased to offer, bound to consent to what Terms he prescribes, antecedently to our engaging our selves by Stipulation or Promise : That his Covenant is a Law to us, and lays us under Obligation, before we are consenting Covenanters ; tho' 'tis not formally a Covenant (in the proper sense of the word) till both Parties are consenting, a Covenant properly being a mutual Agreement of Parties. Observe it, when the Mighty God proposeth a Covenant to his Creatures, a Covenant proposed by him is a Law and Obligatory ipso facto, hath the force of a Law before it is a Covenant accepted. As we read of his Covenant which he commanded to all Generations, *Psal.* 105. 8. This is so evident a Truth, as may be confirmed by the very Light and Law of Nature, which if we would not contradict, we must grant every signification of God's Will, concerning what shall be the Creatures Duty is a Law.

And the Greek word Διαθήκη translated [Covenant] will very well bear it, that the Covenant is also a Law, a Law of Grace : As a Divine of great note, " It signifies God's Statute Law, proposed to us for
 " our Covenant-Consent and Obedience, and promising us Grace and
 " Glory, and signifies the same thing as [the Law of Grace] ; and not
 " a mere absolute Promise, without Precepts, Condition, or Penalty.
 And so Mr. *Lawson* † noteth, " In the Septuagint, it is used mostly for a † *P.* 138.
 C Covenant,

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" *Covenant*, and sometimes for a *Law* or *Command*; and in this place,
 " as in many more, it signifies a *Covenant*, as that the *Covenant* is a
 " *Law*, or implies one.

Quest. 2. What other *Covenant* may this be compared with, when it is called a *better Covenant*?

Ansm. 1. Now, I suppose, it will be readily granted, that the *New Covenant* is better than that *First Covenant* made with Man in *Innocency*; the *Covenant of Grace* better than the *Covenant of Nature*: Not but that the *Fedus Natura*, that *Covenant of Works* was perfect in *suo genere*, exactly fitted to that State wherein Man was created, requiring of Man his whole Duty, that he indispensibly owed unto God his Creator, Owner, great Benefactor, Ruler and Governor, and no more than he was able by *that then natural Power*, which God had given him to perform; and likewise promising him as great a Reward and Felicity, as by that clear Light he had in his pure, primitive State, he

**Vid. Amy-
rald. in
Thes. Sal-
mur. par.
1. p. 225.
S. 55.*

could conceive or desire *. And yet the *Evangelical Covenant* hath the Preheminence. For

(1.) That *Covenant of Nature*, or of *Works*, was founded on the *Work of Creation*, which tho' a great and glorious *Work*, yet the *Work of Redemption* (on which the *Covenant of Grace* is founded) seems a more stupendous, amazing, wonderful *Work*. And there is such a *Display* and *Demonstration of God's Justice, Holiness*, hatred of *Sin*, in that he would not pardon and save Penitent believing Sinners, without such a *Sacrifice* and *Satisfaction* as his Son *Jesus Christ* gave to atone his *Justice*, together with *Riches of Grace* and *Mercy*, in providing such a *Redeemer* for poor lost Sinners, and in enacting and establishing a *Law* or *Covenant of Grace*, wherein he makes over, conveys a *Right* to the *Benefits of Redemption* unto all that take hold of the *Covenant*, and consent to the gracious *Terms* thereof; that the glorious *Angels* in *Heaven* cannot but admire and delight to contemplate on these things, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. And as good *Expositors* note, this was typified by the *Cherubims* looking towards the *Mercy-Seat*, *Exod.* 25. 20. God's glorious Excellencies and Perfections do more illustriously appear and shine forth in the *Evangelical Covenant*, than in that first *Covenant* made with Man.

(2.) The *Evangelical Covenant* is a *better Covenant* than that, as promising some higher *Privileges*, adding to the *Felicity* of the Heirs of the *Promise*, such as sincerely close with its *Terms*. Is not *Union with Christ*, as Members of his *Mystical Body*, to be glorified together with him, and made as conformable as may be to him their glorious *Head*, to shine as the *Sun* incircled with his most resplendent *Beams*; I say, is not such an *Union with a glorified Redeemer*, some higher *Privilege* than *Adam* (had he stood, and kept his first Estate) could have expected, or claimed by that *Covenant* made with him in *Innocency*? Yea, though we suppose that an happy *Life* in *Paradise* would have been but a *Preludium* to his Translation to an higher *Felicity*; yet sound *Divines* (I think) generally agree, that true Believers, the *Seed of Christ*,
 the

the *Second Adam*, shall be rais'd and advanc'd by him to a *greater Degree of Happiness*, than they lost by the Fall of the first *Adam*: So well hath God provided for us in our Blessed Redeemer.

And here (by the way) we may note, we have this Advantage by the *Covenant of Redemption*, If it were so (as some would have it) that Christ was a *strict, proper Surety* for us in the *Covenant of Works* (as bound in that same Bond with Man) then, as it would follow, that *Christ having paid the full Debt* (as our Surety) we should be discharged and justified even by the *Law of Works*, without any Terms, without any thing of Pardon and Forgiveness, and without any further Obligation to yield Obedience to its Precepts. So it would follow, that our Justification by that Law could not intitle us to any higher Privileges, or Happiness, than it promised to *Adam*, had he retain'd his Innocency: And would this be no lessening of God's rich Grace, and of Christ's Merits? I would have so much Charity for those that are most zealous for that Opinion, that if they were aware of the dangerous, dreadful Consequences that attend it, they would not dare to own or entertain it. Tho' we read of Christ's being the Surety of a better Covenant; that is, of the New Testament or Covenant, we never read of his being Surety of the Covenant of Works: It can never be maintain'd that he was bound in the same Bond with Man: The Law of Works did not, could not require Obedience of him, as he was the Son of God. And when he took on him our Nature, and so was made under the Law, yet the Law of Works could not require the same Person, who had a spotless Holiness, and yielded most perfect, sinless Obedience, to undergo the Punishment due to Sin and Sinners, as if he had been the greatest Sinner; nor did the Law of Works require such a Person to suffer in the highest Degree, that would stand with his perfect Holiness to procure Pardon and Peace with God for the Transgressors of it; nor to Merit for Sinners greater Felicity, than it promised unto Man, had he never sinned: But all this was required of Christ in the Covenant of Redemption, or by the Law of Mediation (whereof his fulfilling the Law of Innocency was but a part). And when his Mediatory Righteousness was a Righteousness of a larger Extent, and infinitely greater Value than what the Law of Works required of Man, it could not be the very same with that, it so far excelleth. But Christ performing all which that special Law of Mediation required of him, upon this account he is Mediator of the Gospel-Covenant. And tho' Believers have the Righteousness of Christ to plead against the Charge of the violated Law of Works, yet it is by virtue of the Law, or Covenant of Grace, that this Plea holds good: The Law of Works of it self would admit of no such Plea, as for a Sinner to plead the Righteousness and Obedience of another to justify him, or free him from Condemnation: But this was by the gracious Constitution of God, as above his own Law, tho' he would not Relax its Threatning without such a Satisfaction as magnified the Law, and made it honourable. And it is by the same Covenant of Grace that Believers being justified, are intitled to that higher

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Degree of Glory and Felicity (for the meritorious Righteousness of the Mediator) higher than the Law of Works had any Promise of.

Thus (I suppose) it must be granted, that the *Evangelical Covenant* is better than the Covenant made with Man in Innocency, and establish'd upon better Promises. As it is easy to prove, that Covenant first made with *Adam*, was no sooner broken than the *promissory* part of it quite ceased, for the utter *incapacity* of the *Subject*: And hence it necessarily follows, that a Sinner can never be *justified* by that *Law* or *Covenant* which *condemns* him, and never had any Promise of Pardon or Justification for a Sinner, one that had in any point transgressed it. But

Answ. 2. The *Evangelical Covenant* is better than the *Legal Covenant*, that Covenant whereof *Moses* was Mediator. That Covenant made with the Children of *Israel* at *Mount Sinai*, was a *Covenant of Peculiarity* (as was said in the *Preliminaries* to this Discourse): A *Covenant of Peculiarity* whereby that People was separated from all other Nations, as a *peculiar People* that God had chosen, that were in special Relation to him, under his *special Laws* and *Government*. That *Mosaical Legal Covenant* was an *Appendix* to the *Covenant of Grace* in its *former Edition*, as it had respect unto the *Messiah to come*. Man was not wholly cast off as the Angels were, who kept not their first Estate: That *Covenant of Grace* made with our first Parents immediately after the Fall, with regard to the Blessed Seed of the Woman promised, it was renewed with *Abraham*, and so confirmed, that the *Political Covenant*, which was four hundred and thirty Years after, could not null it, *Gal. 3. 17*. Neither may it be said, that there was no *Grace* in that *Covenant of Peculiarity*: But taking it in *Conjunction with the Promise* or *Covenant of Grace* that went before it (not separating them, as the Carnal *Jews* did;) the *Mosaical Law* or *Covenant* was suited to their *Puerile State*, and might help to cure them in some measure of their Blindness, and gross Ignorance in matters of Religion, which had so overspread the Face of the World, and might be a means to prevent their falling into Idolatry, after the Example of the Nations round about them, that were so grievously corrupted therewith, to which detestable Sin they also were naturally very prone: And that great number of *positive Precepts* given them (many of which were very costly and burdensome) might be a *proper Method* to humble them, who were so apt to be proud of their peculiar Privileges above other Nations; and though I pass by several other Uses and Ends of it, yet I may not omit this, That it was to be their *School Master* to lead them to *Christ*, *Gal. 3. 24*. So it was to make way for an *higher Institution* in the Gospel-Dispensation; and we have ground to conclude, that were it not for its *subserviency* this way, the *Legal Covenant* had never taken place, or been established. As some prove from such Texts of Scripture as these, *Rom. 10. 4. Gal. 3. 24. Rom. 8. 3, 4.* and also from Reason: As otherwise the *Legal Covenant* had been *Inutile*, unprofitable.

*Vid. Thes.
Salmur.
par. 1. p.
226. §. 59.*

profitable; as no Man could have been justified, or could have attained to Life by it, (*Gal. 3. 11, 21.*) Yea, it had been not only *Inutile, sed & noxium*, not only unprofitable, but hurtful; adding many *positive Precepts* to their Duty by the *Law of Nature*, which Precepts could not have been neglected or violated, without a new increase of the Curse, &c.

Quest. 3. But in what Respects is the *Gospel-Covenant* better than the *Legal Covenant*?

Answ. Here I might multiply particular Respects wherein the *Evangelical Covenant* excells the *Legal*, but shall pass by many (not intending a large Discourse on this Subject). But

1. It excelleth the *Legal Covenant* in regard of its *Mediator*. *Moses* was the *Mediator* of the *Legal Covenant*, who was but a *Man*, tho' a *Man of God*, an eminent *Servant of God*: Whereas *Christ, the Son of God*, *God and Man* in one *Person*, he is the *Mediator* of the *Gospel-Covenant*. And *Moses* was a *Mediator* only as an *Internunciatus*, a *Messenger* from *God*, to make known *God's Will and Mind* to the *People*; whereas *Christ* is not barely a *Messenger of the Covenant*, but the *Procureur* and *Author* of the *Covenant*, as the *procureur* of the *Benefits and Blessings* thereof: *John 1. 17. The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* Surely the *Gospel-Covenant* has the pre-eminence in regard of the surpassing *Dignity* of its *Mediator*.

2. There is a great difference betwixt these two *Covenants*, and the *Gospel-Covenant* far excelleth, as to its extent. The *Legal Covenant* was limited and confined to that one *People*, the *Jews*: Whereas the *Gospel-Covenant* is to be published and proposed unto all *Nations*; the *Partition-Wall* that was betwixt *Jews* and *Gentiles*, is broken down: And whosoever they are, whether *Jew*, or *Greek*, *Barbarian*, *Scythian*, *Bond* or *Free*, that hearing the *Gospel*, take hold of the *Covenant*, accept of *Christ* by *Faith*, they are the *Children of Abraham*; there is no more difference betwixt *Jew* and *Gentile*; but they which be of *Faith* are blessed with faithful *Abraham*, *Gal. 3. 7, 8, 9.*

3. There was more darkness and obscurity in the *Legal Covenant* under that *Dispensation*; but there is great *Light* shining forth in the *Gospel*. Under the *Law* spiritual things were veil'd under dark *Types* and *Shadows*; and the *Children of Israel* could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished, *2 Cor. 3. 13.* They could not so clearly discern and apprehend the meaning of those obscure *Types* and *Figures* which had respect to *Christ* and his *Benefits*; they did not well understand the end of the *Law* given them by *Moses*, whereas we under the *Gospel* are privileged with much clearer *Revelation*, and fuller discovery of *God*, and of *Christ* our *Redeemer*, and of what he hath done and suffer'd in order to our *Redemption*, and of the way of coming to *God* by him, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* So we read of *Life and Immortality brought to light through the Gospel*, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* As the Learned *Jac. Capellus*, *The promises of eternal Life which the Legal Covenant had,*
were

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were veiled under Types of earthly things; but these are more clearly and fully proposed to us in the Gospel; as also the way wherein the Terms whereon we may certainly attain to eternal Life, through Christ.

4. The *Evangelical* Covenant had a better way of Worship, and better Ordinances accompanying it. The plainness and simplicity of Gospel-Worship, and Gospel-Institutions is to be preferred before that more pompous way of Ceremonial Worship: The latter more *operous*, but the former more *Instructive* and *Efficacious*. So

5. As we have more means of Grace, choicer means under the Gospel-Covenant, the Spirit of Grace also is more *ordinarily at Work*, that more Grace is wont to attend the means. The Spirit that was given more sparingly under the *Legal* Covenant, and given but to a few then, is given more plentifully, and to many more under the *Evangelical* Covenant: As the *Legal Rites* and Ceremonies are called *Carnal Ordinances*, Heb. 9. 10. Whereas Gospel-Ordinances are the *Ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 8. See again John 1. 17.

6. The Gospel-Covenant is better than the *Legal*, as it is more firm and durable; confirmed as a Testament, with the death of the Testator, Heb. 9. 16, 17. so that there is no disannulling it, nor adding thereto: It is the *everlasting Gospel*, Rev. 14. 6. The *Legal* Covenant was never so established, but was to give place for this better Covenant to succeed, Jer. 31. 31, 32. As Dr. Stillingfleet, * "Must the Covenant God made with the *Israelites* continue for ever, when God expressly saith, "He would make a new one, and that not according to the Covenant which he then made with them?"

7. This New Covenant, the Gospel-Covenant is *establish'd upon* (or with) better Promises. The *Legal* Covenant had Promises; but if abstracted from the Promise or Covenant of Grace that was given before it, they were Promises of an inferior Nature. As it was their *Political* Law, so it had only temporal Promises (in that Consideration and Respect) as a long and prosperous Life in the Land of *Canaan*: But the *Evangelical* Covenant hath far greater and exceeding precious Promises; promises of spiritual Blessings, and everlasting Blessedness, and all upon easier and most gracious Terms.

Thus briefly I have shewn in what Respects the Gospel-Covenant is better than the *Legal*. The main Use of this I shall reserve, wherewith to close this Discourse. Only a few short hints at present.

USE 1. Learn hence to distinguish betwixt the Covenant of Redemption made with Christ, and the Covenant of Grace made with us. The Covenant whereof Christ is Mediator, is not the same with the Covenant of Redemption: Not distinguishing aright betwixt these runneth Men unavoidably upon great Mistakes. In the Covenant of Redemption we were no *Federate Party*, that Covenant being betwixt God and Christ alone; not that we obeyed, satisfied, merited in Christ. In the Covenant of Grace, tho' Christ is again a Party, yet here he comes in

* Orig.
Sacr. p.
225.

in as a *Mediator*, which necessarily implies *another Party* in the Covenant betwixt God and whom he is Mediator. A Mediator there cannot be, but where there are *two Parties* at least confederating; then the Covenant of Grace is betwixt God, Christ our Lord Redeemer, and Mediator, and us; then there are *Terms in the Covenant* unto which we are oblig'd: so we are obliged *in our own Persons* to believe and repent, and to yield sincere Obedience. And we may not think that Christ believed for us, repented for us, or that his most perfect Obedience was to free us from any Obligation to obey our Creator and Redeemer, (which would be an utter *subverting of Christianity*). As *Christ's part* in the Covenant of Redemption was to *purchase* those saving Benefits for us, which are offered and promised in the Covenant of Grace upon such Terms; so according to the Constitution of the Covenant of Grace, it is *our part* to look to the *Terms required*, in order to our participation of those Benefits purchased: And we have *no right* to Pardon and Life, *but upon such Terms* as they are promised in the Covenant of Grace. Again, tho' none come up to Covenant-Terms of themselves, without Grace from the Mediator; yet *Christ's part, as Mediator* of the New Covenant, is *not the same* with our part. Tho' Faith is not of our selves, he gives that Grace whereby we Believe and Repent; yet when we Believe and Repent they are *our free Acts*. And that we may obtain that Grace, whereby to perform them, we are constantly to wait on him for it, in the diligent Use of his appointed Means, and a careful improving of what Grace and Help he offereth, (tho' short of special, effectual *saving Grace*); and otherwise we shall be left without Excuse.

USE 2. Then what Praise and Thanks is due to God, and due to Christ the Procurer and Mediator of this better Covenant! *The best Covenant* that ever was made with Man; a better Covenant there cannot be; 'tis not to be expected; this is the *last Covenant* that ever he will make with Man. O how great is his Mercy towards us, who enjoy the Gospel! That unworthy we are under the best Covenant, under the clearest and best Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace. *From Adam to Abraham* (that is, for above two thousand Years) I think we find only that *one Promise* of the *Seed of the Woman breaking the Serpents head*, (Gen. 3. 15.) that the Church had to live upon. There is an *Allusion* to that Promise unto *Noah*, after the Flood, Isa. 54. 9. But it is there distinguished from God's Covenant of Peace made with his People. Now we have the Covenant of Grace even in the *last, largest, and best Edition* proposed and offer'd to us: A great Privilege and Favour, sure.

USE 3. Then let us dread the thoughts of *receiving such Grace in vain*. If we refuse to accept of Christ and his saving Benefits upon Covenant Terms, what can we have to say for our selves? When we have

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have so great, so good, and gracious an offer in the Gospel, a better Offer we could not have: Yea, we should account all things in the World but Loss and Dung in comparison of Christ and his saving Benefits) and when he vouchsafes plentiful Means and Helps, *proper in their kind*, to take with, and work upon Creatures that have Reason, and will use their Reason; when he does so much to draw us to Consent to his Terms, when nothing is wanting on his part (*as Rector or Governor*) but he has done much more, and waited much longer for our coming in than we had reason to expect; if yet we will not accept of his Offers, what is this but a wilful refusal and rejection of Christ and his Benefits? That if we perish, notwithstanding such a Saviour offer'd, we may thank our selves; we would none of him: He may say, *I would, but ye would not.* And his giving that special Grace to some, (*as Lord and Benefactor*, who may do what he will with his own) which Grace effectually inclines their Wills to accept of him on his own Terms: This cannot be pleaded by others, that will not so accept of him; this will be no Excuse to say, Lord, thou didst not give us that special Grace which would infallibly have gained our Consent. Surely, that can be no *Act of injustice* to deny that free Benefit to multitudes of Sinners, which he might have denied to all; that it is of free Mercy to vouchsafe to any: And may not this stop such Sinners Mouths, that the Lord is beforehand with them? And they *cannot produce one Instance*, where his Grace and Help was denied to a Soul that did humbly and earnestly seek it in his own way, did wait for it in the diligent use of his appointed Means, and was ready to lay hold on it, to comply with, and make use of it: And they cannot prove that the Lord ever deserted any Sinner, who was framing to turn to the Lord, as he might, till provoked by the Sinners neglect, or rejecting of his Grace and Help offer'd; as in that short Script, intituled, *Sententia Eccl. Anglic. &c.* at the end of Bishop Davenant's *Dissertationes Due*, (which Bishop Usher told Mr. Baxter was Dr. Overal's) Salvation in Christ is proposed to Sinners, *Sub conditione fidei, [ut autem hanc conditionem homines præstent, Deus ita verbo præcipit, & factò per Spiritus sancti gratiam excitat & adjuvat, ut in hominibus non in Deo causa sit, si non crediderint, sicut è contra, si crediderint, id divina gratia non humane virtuti tribuendum]*. Where the Doctor would have us know, that God does so much for us, in order to our performing the Condition, so much by his Word and Spirit (as the Gospel is the Ministration of the Spirit, and the Spirit is ordinarily working with it in one degree or other, till we provoke him by our Neglect, or resisting of him to withdraw) that the Cause is in us, not in God, if we believe not: As on the contrary, If we believe, that is to be ascribed not to humane Vertue, but to Divine Grace. But so if we refuse Life and Salvation upon the Terms proposed, 'tis not that the Lord hath been wanting to us (not affording means) but we have been wanting to our selves (not improving Means and Helps vouchsafed, as we might, and ought). That God's Justice will be cleared

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in our sorer Condemnation, for our wilful refusal of such Grace offered, and a sad Reflection upon such our sinful Folly and Madnes will fill us with Anguish, and increase our future Misery and Torment.

It will be vain for any impenitent unbelieving Sinner hereafter to plead, that God gave him not that Grace to Repent and Believe, which he did to those that Repented and Believed; when it shall appear that Salvation was brought to his Choice upon those reasonable and gracious Terms, and yet his Will was set not to comply, not to accept of Salvation so offered; notwithstanding God did more than he was bound to do, or a Sinner could have expected to incline his Will to the Terms requir'd: Might he not have taken any of us at our first word, at our first Refusal of his Grace offer'd, and said, *Because I have called, and ye refused*, therefore ye shall never have one Call more, nor ever have the like offer again?

USE 4. A few words (and but a few words here) to such as have accepted of, and are interested in this better Covenant. Improve so blessed a Benefit, and let it be your great Care to walk answerably to so sacred a Bond: And you that frequently approach to the *Lord's Table*, consider, The *Lord's Supper* is a *Federal Feast*, and a *Seal* of the better Covenant: So upon your sincere renewing Covenant with God, and with Christ the Mediator of the Covenant, you have God and Christ *sealing it afresh to you*; and see that in this Federal Feast you act Faith afresh upon Christ, for Grace and Strength to keep Covenant, renewing your Resolutions (in the Strength of his Grace) to be more stedfast in the Covenant.

Doct. 3. The *Evangelical Covenant* is *firmly established*. The word in the Original is very *emphatical*, *νενομωδότηται*, *sancitum est*, as *Beza*, and others, ordained, *establish'd as a Law*: So much the word imports, it properly signifies (as any one that has but a smattering in the Greek Tongue, must confess) *Established as a Law*. *Legem dicimus νῆμον, quasi μόνοντα νόμον*. And this so established as to be more irrevocable than the *Law of the Medes and Persians*. It is the *Everlasting Covenant*, *Satis fuerat dicere τεύχεται, sed maluit dicere νενομωδότηται ut ostenderet pactum hoc simul & Legem esse; sic junguntur Lex & pactum*, Psal. 78. 10. (*Grotius*). The Apostle would rather use this compound Verb, that he might shew this Covenant to be also a *Law*; so *Law* and *Covenant* are joyned. Psal. 78. 10. *They kept not the Covenant of God, and refused to walk in his Law*. So the Learned Dr. Owen is most clear and full upon the Text; *This is the meaning of the word νενομωδότηται, established, say we. But it is reduced into a fixed State of a Law or Ordinance: All the Obedience required in it, all the Worship appointed by it, all the Privileges exhibited in it, and the Grace administered with them, are all given for a Statute Law and Ordinance unto the Church —. This the Apostle intends by νενομωδότηται, the Legal Establishment of the New Cove-*

nant, with all the Ordinances of its worship; hereon the other Covenant was disannulled —. [Third Vol. on Heb. p. 221.] where it is most evident, that Dr. Owen would not have approved of those that understand no more by the New Covenant, than *mere absolute Promises*, without any matter of precept. What is cited here out of his Exposition, is clearly, firmly grounded and bottomed on the Sacred Text, and directly proves the Gospel-Covenant a Law, a Law of Grace: And though it is no wonder that such as look on themselves as *above Ordinances*, and have quite *cast off the positive Institutions* of Christ in the Gospel; no wonder if such will not admit of, but reject this sound Exposition; yet it may justly seem strange, that such as profess to have a Zeal for the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ, should not be satisfied with this Exposition, who yet manifestly contradict it, when they deny the Gospel or New Covenant to be a Law.

This Covenant, this better Covenant was purchased, procur'd, *ratified* and confirmed by the precious *Blood of Christ*, Matth. 26. 28. As it is also confirm'd by the *Sacraments* of the New Testament, instituted by Christ, and *annex'd as Seals* to the Covenant, 1 Cor. 11. 25. And it wanteth not confirmation by the *Privy Seal* of the Spirit in the Hearts and Consciences of such to whom this Covenant is proposed, and more especially of those, who are by his Grace effectually persuaded to accept of it, and sincerely consent to it.

I would haste to the next Proposition, on which I must make a longer stay: Only some Use and Improvement should be made of this.

USE 1. Then how great is the Sin of those who will not accept of this better Covenant which the Lord hath establish'd and propos'd to them. Here

1. I should think this *evident* by the very *Light of Nature*, that when God proposeth and offers a Covenant to his Creatures, *ipso facto* it becomes a *Law* to them; that they are bound to accept of what God offers, and to consent to any Terms he requires. And the *very Law of Nature* proves, That *any signification of God's Will* concerning what shall be the Creatures Duty, *is a Law* (as was said before, p. 15.) For any to say, [That any signification of God's Will concerning what shall be our Duty is a *Law*, except in a *Promise*] is a *mere Evasion*. So the Heathen might (with as much Reason) say, *Any signification of God's Will* concerning what shall be Mans Duty is a *Law*, except in his *Works*, and consequently plead that they are under no Law at all.

But so when God proposeth a Covenant to his Creatures, they are *obliged to consent* to it; and to refuse is Rebellion against God, a Contempt of the most Absolute, supreme Authority. Ezek. 20. 37, 38. They are *Rebels* that will not come into the *Bond of the Covenant*.

2. The *Evangelical Covenant* is the *special Law of the Redeemer*: And thus Sinners not consenting unto, but rejecting the Covenant, they
Sin

Sin directly against Christ. The Gospel-Covenant was procur'd and confirm'd by his most precious Blood, therefore called *the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. That to reject the same is (in a degree) a *treading under foot the Son of God*: Such do what in them lieth to render the Death of Christ in vain. If all should do as they, then would not his Blood be *as Water spilt upon the Ground*? Then might he not as well have spared all that Cost and Pains? Then all that Christ did and suffered, that he might be the Mediator of the Covenant, would *turn to no account*, as to his being the Author of eternal Salvation to any in the World.

And further, The *Evangelical Covenant* is the *special Law of the Redeemer*, as not only procur'd by his meritorious Satisfaction, but *in-acted by his Regal Authority*, together with the Authority of the Father, as in Christ a God reconciling Sinners unto himself. It was *so agreed* and determined betwixt God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, in the *Covenant of Redemption*, that we Sinners under the Gospel should reap the Fruit, partake of the saving Benefits of Redemption, only in such a way, upon such Gospel-Terms. And as *all Power was given to Christ in Heaven and in Earth*, and *all Judgment committed unto him*, so that God hath no Law but what is put into Christ's hand; this Law of Grace is *in special* the Law of Christ, as Redeemer. It should be out of Question among all that call themselves Christians, that Christ, *as our Redeemer*, is a *King*, as well as Prophet and Priest, and executeth the Office of a King: And if he be a *King, as Redeemer*, he must have a *Law*: I durst not for a World give it under my hand, that Christ hath no Law as Redeemer; and wonder at those that are otherwise minded: According to the Text, the Covenant is *established as a Law*, and its being established with better Promises is not at all opposite to its being a Law. The Covenant of Works had a Promise annex'd, notwithstanding which it was a Law of Works: So the Covenant of Grace, notwithstanding its *better Promises*, yea *with respect* unto these, is a *Law of Grace*; it hath the Properties and Effects of a Law; it is both *norma officii*, & *judicii*, a Rule of our Duty and of Christ's proceeding in Judgment, and passing a final Sentence on us.

Now must not this aggravate the Sin of those that consent not to the Terms of the Gospel-Covenant, that they *cast off the Law of the Redeemer*? This is to shew themselves Enemies to their best Friend, to whom they are under such Obligations as they can never fully answer (if they would Study and Indevour it, as far as it is possible) while they have a Being: This shews Sinners most shameful and horrible Ingratitude and Contempt of God's Grace, and of the Love of the Redeemer.

3. The Sin of such as have been Baptized and solemnly entred into Covenant, if afterwards they refuse to stand to the Covenant, is thus aggravated as an heinous *breach of Covenant*. 'Tis an odious thing to

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break Covenant with Men; then what is it to deal treacherously, perfidiously with God and Christ?

4. For any of us not to accept of the Gospel-Covenant, not to consent to its Terms, is sinning against, *rejecting the only Remedy* provided for us, and thus Sinning against our own Souls. As we are all Sinners we could expect nothing but Condemnation, if left to the Law or Covenant of Works. Speaking of Adult Persons we certainly remain under the Curse of that Covenant, till we come to take hold of the Covenant of Grace, consenting to its Terms. The violated Law and Covenant of Innocency has no promise of Pardon and Life for Sinners; no way for such to be freed from Condemnation but of God's Free Grace, through Christ, and the Redemption he hath purchased. Now the *matter is stated* in the Covenant of Grace, *upon what Terms* we shall have Pardon and Life of God's Free Grace, for Christ's Merits: But till (through Grace) we come to comply with the Terms required, we cannot lay claim to Covenant Benefits promised only upon those Terms.

5. Sinners by rejecting the Gospel-Covenant not only continue under Wrath and Condemnation, but incur a much sorer Condemnation and Punishment, than others by all their grossest wicked Works committed against the *Law of Nature*. The *final Rejection* of Grace, Pardon, and Life offered in the Gospel is *the condemning Sin*, and that which will exceedingly increase the Wo and Misery of such Adversaries to God's Grace, and Despisers of their own Mercy; such are *Miserable by their own choice*, refusing the greatest Mercy offer'd.

O that impenitent, unbelieving Sinners would seriously consider (before the *day of Grace* is quite over, and God's *Treaty of Peace* at an end with them) what Tribulation and Anguish, what Indignation and Wrath will most certainly be their Portion for ever, if they do not here in time regard the things that belong unto their Peace.

USE 2. Here's great Encouragement for Sinners to come in and take hold of the Gospel-Covenant; there's *no cause for any to Despair*, though some may have received the Sentence of Death in themselves, being convinc'd of their Sins, and of their being liable to everlasting Condemnation, according to the Tenor of the Law of Works: That hath nothing to say to Sinners, but [*The Soul that sinneth shall die*] yet there is more hope of sensible Sinners, that see themselves in a lost Estate, that no longer trust in themselves, nor put Confidence in the Flesh. A *Self-despair does well*, is of great Use, when hereupon we flee for Refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us in the Gospel. There indeed we may see a *Door of Hope* set open to Sinners, a full Remedy provided, Pardon and Life offered to Sinners upon gracious Terms. And the Gospel is so established that no Sinner, who is within the Sound and Call of the Gospel, where a Pardon is offered, hath ground to Despair. And here let it be considered,

1. There

1. There is *Provision made* in the Covenant of Grace for the Pardon of the greatest Sins thou hast been guilty of, upon thy Repentance and Return to God, and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ: See *Isa. 55. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14.* Even the *unpardonable Sin* would not be so, but that it utterly *bars out Faith and Repentance*: Therefore it is unpardonable, because it is *impossible to renew* those Apostates *again to Repentance*, who have provoked the Spirit of Grace (so highly) to forsake them quite, that their Hearts (which they have so desperately *hardened against the most convincing means*) are thus lock'd up in Impenitency and Infidelity: See *Heb. 6. 4, 6.* So it would be highly injurious, *greatly derogatory* to the rich Grace of God, and to the infinite Merits of Christ for a Sinner to conclude, that his Sins were more, greater than could be forgiven. There is a Pardon in the Covenant for the Sins of every penitent Believer, how many, how great soever they have been; when the lesser Sins of the meer Moralist, or externally Righteous Man will condemn him, he having no Interest in Christ and his Righteousness to cover them, no Pardon by the Covenant of Grace, while without Repentance, and a believing Acceptance of Christ.

2. The Gospel-Covenant [which is an *Act of Indemnity, or Conditional Pardon*] is for every Sinner to whom it is proposed, to take hold on; and therefore for thee as well as others: And not only so, that *thou mayest*, but *thou oughtest*, it is thy Duty to take hold on it. *1 Job. 3. 23. This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* And none are excepted, *none excluded* from a Covenant Interest in Christ and his Saving Benefits, but *only such as exclude themselves* by their voluntary Unbelief, and rejecting or neglecting, despising that Grace offer'd in the Gospel. Here I am speaking of all those to whom the Word of Salvation is sent. *John 3. 16.—Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life.* The offer of Christ, with his Saving Benefits, is free and general, to one as well as another; to every one upon their willing Acceptance of him, as he is offered.

3. In my Thoughts; this should be both a quickning and encouraging consideration, That the Gospel-Covenant is *stored, furnished, and attended with such Means and Helps* to bring over Sinners to the Terms requir'd, in order to their partaking of the Benefits promis'd; that if this blessed Effect follows not, Sinners are left without all Excuse, and must take all the Blame on themselves; that when Pardon and Life were brought to their Choice, their wicked Wills were most unreasonably set against the things of their Peace: That they would *reject the Counsel of God against themselves.* As secure and careless Sinners should think of this, and how it will aggravate their future Misery and Torment to remember how fairly they were offer'd, and that the Lord was not wanting, as to means, and *what became him to do, as a gracious Rector and Governor*: And yet such was their wicked Wilfulness and Madness, that they would still go on in the way of Destruction
against

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against such means and offers of Grace: So on the other hand, if thou art awakened, and beginnest to be thoughtful and concern'd about thy Salvation; may not this excite and encourage thee to set about the Work, to consider how the Lord is beforehand with thee, that the Work is not like to stick at him?

(1.) Sinners have *express Precept* in the Gospel: God hath clearly signified his Will, expressly calling us to Repent. Acts 17. 30. *Now God commandeth all Men to Repent*; and to Believe in Christ: *This is his Commandment, that we believe*, — as before, 1 John 3. 23. Where the Word of a King is, there is Power: And shall God's express Command be of no Power with us? And further, what Grace there is to be acknowledged in these Gospel-Commands? The Law of Works would take no notice of a Sinners Repentance, in order to Pardon.

(2.) In the Gospel Sinners have most *gracious Promises*, most precious Benefits promised on these Terms; As, *Repent, that your Sins may be blotted out. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* All the Pleasures, Riches, Honours in the World are nothing worth, compar'd with what is offer'd in the Covenant of Grace, and thereby ensur'd to those that Consent to its Terms. And if we believe we have immortal Souls to Save or Lose, what can be *more unreasonable*, than to be more concern'd about the things of this Life, which we can have no fast hold of, than we are for our Souls, that it may go well with them for ever?

(3.) The *peremptory Threatning* annex'd [*Except ye Repent, ye shall Perish. He that Believeth not shall be Damned*] is a proper means to *awaken our Fear*, as the promissory part of the Covenant is to *excite our Desire*, and to *encourage Hope*. And what senseless, presumptuous Creatures Sinners are, who fear not to persist in their Impenitency and Unbelief, against the most dreadful Divine Threatnings? And is there no Grace even in these very Threatnings, as they have a proper tendency to rouse Sinners out of their Security, to look about them, and to do what in them lieth (in the use of God's appointed means) to *fly from the Wrath to come*? Thus the very *Constitution* of the Covenant of Grace, and its *several parts*, are proper means to gain Sinners consent. Were it not so, it would not aggravate the Condemnation of such as finally stand out.

(4.) A *standing Ministry* in the Church. And the Ministers of the Gospel are Ambassadors for Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 20. As they are to call, invite, and persuade Sinners in his Name to come in; and this is a special means the Lord is wont to bless, to the Conversion and Salvation of Souls; even that preaching of Christ, which many count Foolishness, Rom. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

(5.) *Examples* of others that have been great Sinners, and for all that were received graciously upon their coming in, 1 Tim. 1. 16. They that are not affected with such moving and encouraging Examples and Instances of God's Grace, are greatly blame-worthy, Mat. 21. 32.

(6.) *Divine*

(6.) *Divine Patience* and Forbearance. The Lord's giving Sinners space to Repent, granting them a *Reprieve*, should be improved to their suing out a *Pardon*: That Sentence is not speedily executed on them, it may, and should convince Sinners that God is *not willing they should perish, but rather that they should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11. The Long-Suffering of the Lord hath a tendency towards Sinners Salvation, 2 Pet. 3. 15.

(7.) That Sinners have not barely a *Reprieve*, but many *Tokens of Divine Bounty*, many undeserved Mercies, forfeited Mercies: Should not such Coals heaped on our Heads be a means to melt our Hearts? The Goodness of God is to *lead Sinners to Repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. Even his common Beneficence may be some *Intimation that God is not implacable*: It shews that he dealeth not with Sinners strictly, according to the violated Law of Works: Were it so, Sinners had never seen any Good coming to them; but such Goodness as they daily see and taste of, may both engage and *encourage them to seek and inquire after the Lord, if haply they may find him*, Acts 17. 27.

(8.) Even *Afflictions* should be a means to bring Sinners home: Thus the *Prodigal was whip'd home*; thus the Lord oft' openeth their Ear to Discipline, and *commandeth that they return from Iniquity*, Job 36. 10. *Afflictions* should be a *means to discover Sin*, to shew wherein we have exceeded, and a *means to embitter Sin*. And should we not turn to the Lord when he smites us, if we would not that a worse thing come to us, or would not shew our selves Incorrigible?

(9.) The *signal Judgments* that have sometimes fallen upon obstinate Sinners, *have a Voice* to warn others. As *Wrath to the uttermost* came on the *Jews*, for their rejecting and opposing the Gospel, 1 Thess. 2. 16. And see what use we should make of it, Rom. 11. v. 20, 21, 22. *Because of Unbelief they were broken off*: And if God spared not them it should be a warning to us, and others.

Such variety of Means as Sinners have to bring them within the Bond of the Covenant, will witness against obstinate Refusers, and leave them without any Plea or Excuse: Whereas it may encourage *penitent Sinners* to come in and to take hold of the Covenant, as it would be *most pleasing to God*; which is evident by the great means he vouchsafes, and the *various methods* he takes to bring in Sinners.

(10.) Above all, the *Spirit of Grace* is offering his *Help*, and that again and again: He is at Work with Sinners time after time, *convincing them of Sin*, and of the miserable Estate they are in, under Guilt, and under God's Wrath, liable to everlasting Condemnation; shewing them the *Necessity of a change of State*, a change of Heart and Life, without which they cannot be saved; raising some good Desires, good Purposes, &c. He is thus *striving with them*, sometimes in the Ministry of the Word, sometimes under some sharp Affliction, some smarting Rod, sometimes upon some great Deliverance, &c. And where a Sinner is under some *preparatory Work* (thus) tending towards Conversion,

*Of this see
the Judg-
ment of the
British
Divines,
In Act.
Synod.
Dordrec.
par. 2. p.
166, 167.*

version, having Convictions in his Conscience, and some sense of his Sinfulness, with a fear of Wrath to come, and his Heart something affected with the glad Tidings of a Saviour, and moved with some desire after Christ, and the like; the *Holy Spirit is not wont to withdraw*, desists not from the Work begun to promote the Sinner in the way to true Conversion and Salvation, *until the Sinner provokes him to withdraw by a wilful Neglect, or rejecting of his Help offered*. That the Spirits forsaking such is a *Penal Act*, a just (tho' most severe) Punishment of their great Sin, in setting at nought his Counsel, and quenching his Motions, and thus *grieving, vexing, and rebelling* against the Spirit: The *Reason* most plainly assigned of *Sinners miscarrying* in this Case, and perishing finally, is *Sinners refusal*. Prov. 1. 24. *Because I called and ye refused*. And as those excellent Divines of ours in the Synod of Dort note, *We have never the least hint in Scripture, that God is wont, or ever would, without Mans previous Fault, snatch away from any one the Help of exciting Grace, or any Aid (or furtherance) which he had once conferred, appointed to Mans Conversion, who add, Sic docuere patres Orthodoxi, quibus cum pelagianis negotium fuit.*

Now may not this encourage sensible Sinners, who begin to be concern'd for their Souls, and are thinking with themselves, *What shall we do to be saved?* Poor Sinner, it was not without a Work of the Spirit, setting Conscience at Work, that thou art come thus far; and he that *has begun* with thee is ready to go on to thy thorow Conversion; 'tis not likely that the Work should stick at him. Keep close to his appointed Means, and attend his Motions, lay hold on his Help offer'd, and follow his Counsel as far as thou canst, and thou hast no cause to Despair of, but rather may'st Hope for his further Help.

USE 3. Here's ground of *strong Consolation*, of everlasting Consolation for true Believers, sincere Christians, such as have heartily accepted of, and are actually interested in this better Covenant: It is a *Covenant established*; so an Interest in the Covenant is a *sure and firm Estate*. How little valuable are all Worldly things, that are so *unstable*! Was there more in them than any of us ever yet found; their *mutableness* would take off so much as would leave them of little Value; all things here below are unsatisfactory, uncertain. Thus, *Verily, every Man at his best settled State, is altogether Vanity*, Psal. 39. 5. What Fools are they that value themselves by the Favour of Men, or by their Riches, or by any worldly Enjoyments whatsoever? Their Mountain here is never so strong, but may quickly be overturned: But that Man or Woman is happy indeed, who has a special Covenant-Interest in God and Christ, and shall be for ever happy. In his Favour is Life; yea, his Favour is better than Life. The *Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed*, but the Loving-kindness of the Lord shall not depart from such, neither shall the *Covenant of his Peace be removed*, Isa. 54. 10. Such as incline their Ear and come to him, their Soul

Soul shall live; with them he makes an *everlasting Covenant*, even the *sure Mercies of David*, *Isa. 55. 3.* David under his saddest outward Circumstances could acquiesce herein. *2 Sam. 23. 5.* *Altho' my House be not so with God* (and altho' he make it not to grow) yet he hath made with me an *everlasting Covenant*, ordered in all things and *sure*: for this is all my *Salvation*, and all my *desire*. Here are the *sure Mercies*, even in this Covenant so firmly established: His Mercy will he keep for his own for evermore, and his *Covenant shall stand fast* with them; his *Loving-kindness* he will not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. *His Covenant he will not break*, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his Lips: The everlasting Covenant is a fresh Spring of everlasting Consolation. And it appears by what we have, *Heb. 6. 17, 18.* that God is willing the *Heirs of Promise* should have strong Consolation, confirming his gracious Counsel and Covenant by his Word and Oath too; even by those two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.

But this strong Consolation is not for all, but it belongs to the *Heirs of Promise*, true Believers. As they which be of Faith are blessed with faithful Abraham: And the blessed Inheritance is so surely made over to them in the Covenant, that they shall not be put beside it.

O Christians prove your Faith, and doubt not of God's faithfulness. Prove that you have a Covenant-Interest in God, and so you may warrantably conclude that *he will be your God*. Prove your Interest in Christ, and then you have good ground to rejoice in Christ Jesus, the Consolation of Israel. Well may you solace your selves with him, if Christ be yours; if Christ be yours, then all's yours. Certainly you are in a safe and happy State, if an Interest in those invaluable Benefits and Blessings, those sure Mercies contain'd in the everlasting Covenant can make ones State safe and happy. But as you would be filled with the Joy and Consolation thereof, see that you clear your Covenant Interest, that through Grace you are real consenting Covenanters with God and Christ. For any one to lay claim to such Blessings, as Justification, Adoption, Glorification, which are promised in the Covenant, without taking notice of the Conditions or Terms whereon they are promised, is very gross presumption, and mere *Self-delusion*.

If there are no Terms then there is no Covenant. For any to say, that if there are Terms in the New Covenant, these would make it a *Covenant of Works*; is as much as to say, God never made, nor could make any other Covenant with Man, but the Covenant of Works: There is no Covenant (speaking properly) but where there is something required, as well as something promised. Exclude Terms from the Covenant, and you will make no more of it than an *absolute Promise*, which differs from a Covenant. Again, if the Gospel-Covenant be without any Terms or Condition, then either all who have the Gospel, may look on themselves, as having God and Christ in Covenant with them; so no longer to be under the Covenant of Works, and liable to be called

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to Account, and condemn'd for the violation of that Covenant, *or else no one* hath any ground to look on himself, as having a Covenant-Interest in God and Christ more than another, more than any one that lives under the Gospel. Then how could such a one as *David* say, Thou art *my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation*, (as *Psal. 89. 26.*) There is no such *special Consolation* to be drawn from the Covenant, if it hath *no Terms, Condition, or Qualification*, describing and determining the Persons who have such a special Interest in God by Covenant. Suppose it *without any Terms or Condition*, and how shall it distinguish one Man from another? When it is made known, *must not all* to whom it is made known, *have an equal Interest* in it? Or if the Covenant be made only with the Elect, how shall a Man know that he is an elect Person, *without special immediate Revelation*? And how shall he know that Revelation he may seem to have, is no Satanical Illusion?

But if we would know that God is *our God*, we must see that we are *his People*, such as are sincerely devoted to him: And if we are such indeed, we are no longer in League with his Enemies, or any that would be *Competitors* with him. *Hos. 3. 3. Thou shalt not play the Harlot, and thou shalt not be for another Man, so will I also be for thee. Isa. 63. 8. Surely they are my People, Children that will not Lie* (that will not deal falsely in my Covenant) so he was their Saviour. So if we would know that Christ is ours, we must see that we are his. *Cant. 6. 2. I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine.* As by Faith we receive Christ, so we give up our selves as his own, and would not keep him out of his Right. Dr. *Sibs* (that sound Gospel-preacher) speaking of the Nature of the Covenant, * says, *There must be Consent on both sides, or else the Covenant cannot hold: There are Indentures drawn between God and us— A mutual Engagement in the Covenant; God engageth himself to us and we engage our selves to God in Christ. And where this mutual Engagement is, there the Covenant is perfect (or compleat).* Thus according to him we must necessarily grant, that there are *Terms, Articles* in the Covenant, to which our Consent is required; and indeed it must be so, otherwise it is *no Covenant*: What wants the *Form* of a Covenant is no Covenant: Now where there are *no Articles* the *Form* of a Covenant is wanting.

I am an old Man, and remember something how Ministers (fifty Years since, or more) were put upon pressing their Hearers to *examine* themselves, and try the state of their Souls by *Scripture marks and signs*, which those called *Antinomians*, did very much cry down. They would not allow Sinners to *question God's special Love* in Christ, or to examine whether they were in Christ: As if they had never read *2 Cor. 13. 5. Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves.* Such Teachers were likely to build Sinners up in *Presumption*; but not to promote the Joy of Faith. But Christians, as the *Consolations* of God should not be small with you, let me desire
and

* *Evangelical Sacrifices,*
Part 2.
p. 180.

and advise you to do what in you lieth to clear your Interest in the Covenant of Grace by a Work of Grace, and to have the Spirit it self bearing Witness with your Spirits, that ye are the Children of God, by his actuating Grace in you, and shining on his own Work, so as you may clearly discern it : Thus your Joy may be full, and such as the World should not take from you. Such a full Covenant, so firmly established, is a sufficient ground of strong Consolation to those that can prove their *actual Interest* in it. An Interest in the unalterable everlasting Covenant, an Interest in the immutable, eternal, All-sufficient God, and in the ever-blessed Redeemer, an all-sufficient Saviour, and so an Interest in the everlasting Heavenly Inheritance may mightily bear up and cheer the Heart and Spirit of a sound, sincere Christian, whatever changes he meets with here in this present World : Let the *Times change*, let Men prove fickle and false ; let Estate, Riches, fail, and Friends fail, and Flesh fail, yet the Heart of such a one should not fail ; he may take Courage upon account of those *sure Mercies* made over to him in the everlasting Covenant : God's faithfulness can never fail.

Now I come to the last Proposition.

Doct. 4. *This better Covenant is established upon (or as some read, with) better Promises. And*

1. I take it to be *undeniable*, that the *Covenant of Grace* made with Man is *established upon the Covenant of Redemption* made with Christ ; this was the Foundation of it. The Covenant of Grace made with *Adam, Noah, Abraham*, was *upon consideration* of Christ's being to undertake and perform the Conditions of the *mediatory Covenant* ; those exceeding great and precious Privileges, Benefits, and Blessings, with everlasting Blessedness, are promised in the Covenant of Grace to Believers, *as his Seed* ; and they are *blessed with all Spiritual Blessings* in heavenly Places (or things) *in Christ*, Eph. 1. 3. In the Covenant of Redemption *more was requir'd of Christ than the Law of Innocency requir'd of Man* : So a *far greater Glory was promised unto Christ* than was promised to Man in Innocency, or than any meer Creature is capable of, which is *conferr'd on our Redeemer*, Matth. 28. 19. Rom. 14. 9, 10. Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22. And he hath also *merited*, and hath Power to confer on his Members *greater Glory and Felicity* than *Adam could have claimed* by the Law of Innocency : That they look short, and speak short, who look upon Christ our *Mediator* as our *strict, proper Surety* in the Covenant of Works, and so that we are *justified by the Law of Works*, when it is a better Covenant (tho' that was *perfect in its kind*) a Covenant better for us, that Believers are justified for the meritorious Righteousness of Christ, and thereby *intituled to a higher Felicity* than the Covenant of Works had any promise of.

2. Tho' the *Covenant of Grace* be not *absolute*, yet there are *absolute Promises* included in it, or belonging to it: I mean, promises of the first special discriminating Grace, that the Lord will vouchsafe to a certain chosen number, whereby they shall not fail to perform the Conditions required in the Covenant: As is commonly said, There are *promises of Grace* as well as *promises unto Grace*.

But though there are absolute Promises of the first Grace, that the Lord will vouchsafe to some, no less unworthy, than others for whom he does not so much; (and *may he not do what he will with his own?* May he not choose to make whom he pleaseth the Objects of his special Grace and Favour? Have they due Conceptions of *God's Dominion*, who deny him that Power and Liberty in dispensing his free Benefits, that none could claim as their due; when his Creatures, earthly Princes, Benefactors exercise such an *Arbitrary Power*, without any charge of *injustice?*) Yet it will not hence follow that the Covenant of Grace is Absolute, without any Condition. Some would have it as *Absolute*, as that Promise to Noah, That the Earth should no more be destroyed with a Deluge of Water, *Gen. 9. 11.* which is not so: For it is certain, that the World shall no more be destroyed with such an Universal Deluge, *whether Men believe it or no*: But we cannot be saved by Christ whether we believe in him or no. 'Tis very plain, that those *fundamental Covenant-Benefits* of Justification, Remission of Sin, and Reconciliation with God are not promised, but *upon Condition* of Faith in Christ, and turning to God by true Repentance: That we are fully to conclude, No impenitent, unbelieving Sinner is in a justified State, hath his Sins pardoned, and hath Peace with God: And so the *final Benefits* of the Covenant of Grace, as full Redemption, everlasting Life and Glory, are not promised but to *such as overcome*, endure to the end, *upon Condition* of persevering in the Faith, *Matth. 24. 13. Heb. 10. 38, 39.*

And it is to be noted, that the *Conditional Covenant* and Promises include all and every one, unto whom the Gospel cometh, *John 3. 16. Rom. 10. 9.* So that there is no Sinner that heareth the Gospel, but hath a *Conditional Right* to Pardon, Justification, and Salvation upon those Terms, and ought so to conclude with himself; whereas all, and every one are not included in the *absolute Promise*; nor can any elect Person absolutely conclude, that he hath a particular Interest therein, while Unregenerate, or till the effect, the performance of the Promise some way appears, and evidenceth it.

Though it must be granted, (1.) That Christ knows who they are that are included in the absolute Promises; and he hath a *Right* to plead those Promises for such as are given him of the Father, and shall be his Seed.

(2.) And the Church of Christ may also plead the absolute Promises for a *Succession of true Believers* to spring up, to be added to her by vertue of the absolute Promise, and the Donation of that first special Grace promised.

(3.) Tho'

(3.) Though Sinners (while unconverted) cannot make a *direct Claim* to the absolute Promise of the first *special Grace*, yet such absolute Promise is of great use.

And that 1. As *intimating Man's Insufficiency* to believe and repent of himself, without the special Grace of God; as our Divines have argued from Promises of the first Grace, against the *Power of Nature* or *Free Will* in a Natural Man, to the exerting of gracious Acts. What need was there of any such Promise, if Man had a Power to act graciously of himself?

2. Such absolute Promise is of great use, as teaching Sinners whither, to whom they are to go to obtain saving Grace: They must make suit to God for it as earnestly as they can, and wait for it in the diligent use of this and other means he hath appointed; not that a Natural Man can do any thing, which is properly a *Condition of the first Grace* to be given; for then it should not be absolutely promised; but that it is an extraordinary Case when God vouchsafes it to a Sinner that makes no use of his appointed means. 'Tis great Presumption for any to expect God's working Grace in them, while they have no regard to the means of Grace. The Lord hath said, that *he will be sought unto*, Ezek. 36. 37. And *Faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17.

3. Such absolute Promise may help to support and encourage sensible Sinners. Tho' they cannot see themselves *certainly included* in the absolute Promise; yet neither may they say, that they are *certainly excluded*; the Lord may have such Grace in store for them; and for any thing they know, those *effects of common Grace* they have, may be an *introduction* to special Grace. And when there is 'so much as a [*maybe*] and the life of our Souls lieth on it, how greatly does it concern us earnestly to apply our selves to God for his Grace? And how unreasonable is it for any to sit still, as unconcern'd, or to lie down in Despair, while there may be hope? No fear of a Sinners losing any thing, or faring worse, by putting forth himself to the utmost to obtain saving Grace. But what I have written * concerning the absolute Promises makes me contract here. I shall only add, these are *some of those better Promises included in the New Covenant*, which were not in the *Mosaical, Legal Covenant* taken by it self, but did properly belong to the Covenant of Grace, called *the Promise*, which was long before that *Political Covenant* or *Covenant of Peculiarity*. * *of the Covenant of Grace. Propos. 9. p. 179. &c.*

3. The Covenant of Grace hath *Conditional Promises*, without which it were not properly a Covenant; though some would prove the contrary from the Context following, yet they fall short of what they aim at: For here are *Conditions implied*, though not expressed. Who are we to understand by the *House of Israel* (here *ver. 10.* with whom this Covenant is made) who, but believing *Jews and Gentiles*, the *spiritual Seed of Abraham*? And when the Lord promised to put *his Laws into their Mind*, and write them in their Hearts, it shews that he will have his People an holy and obedient People. That we must be such

such as ever we would that God should own us for his People : As his People are said to *keep his Covenant* and his Testimonies, *Psal. 25. 10.* How can they be said to keep his Covenant, if *keeping his Testimonies*, his Precepts, if walking in his Statutes be not a *Condition required* of them in his Covenant : If the Covenant *requires nothing of them*, there can be *no keeping Covenant on their part*. And when the Lord promiseth (*ver. 12.*) to be *merciful to their Unrighteousness*, &c. 'Tis certain, that the promise of Pardon and Forgiveness of Sins is *not absolute*, without Condition : But we must understand this Promise to belong only to penitent Believers. Nothing is more plain in the Gospel, than that there is no Justification of a Sinner but by Faith ; and no Forgiveness of Sins without Repentance.

But that the Covenant of Grace is Conditional, hath Conditional Promises, I have shewed *.

* Of the
Covenant
of Grace.
Propos. 6.
p. 134. &c.

4. The Promises of the New Covenant are better Promises.

1. Greater, *better things are promised* here. The promises of the Gospel-Covenant are *mostly spiritual* : Promises of spiritual Blessings, as Justification, Remission of Sins, Adoption, Sanctification, &c. And these as the *First Fruits* of everlasting Blessedness and Glory in the World to come. And what was a prosperous Life in the Land of *Canaan*, to that blessed Life of the Saints in Heavenly *Canaan* ? Is there not as vast a difference betwixt these, as betwixt Earth and Heaven, as betwixt Time and Eternity ? The things promised in the Gospel-Covenant are *incomparably better* than what the *Legal Covenant* (taken by it self) did promise. As it was a *Political Covenant*, given to the People of the *Jews*, as the *Law of their Land*, by which they were to be governed ; thus considered by it self (I say) it had *only temporal Promises*, Promises of long Life and Prosperity : Though taken *in conjunction with the Promise* or Covenant of Grace made with their Father *Abraham* long before ; thus (I grant) the Covenant of Grace was *the same for substance* under the Old and New Testament : But taking the *Mosaical, Legal Covenant* by it self, it was quite another thing.

2. So the *Legal Covenant* taken by it self, had but the *Types* of those great Benefits and Blessings which are promised in the Gospel-Covenant ; as it had only a *typical Expiation* of Sin. The Legal Sacrifices sanctified only to the purifying of the Flesh, *Heb. 9. 13.* *The Law made nothing perfect*, *Heb. 7. 19.* But the *real Expiation* of Sin, to the purging of the Conscience, is by the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God. The former *Legal cleansing* by the *Levitical Priesthood*, was to free them from that Temporal Guilt and Punishment, which otherwise by the Law they were obnoxious unto, and served for their *Right of Admission* to the Congregation of God's People ; and thus it *typified* the real expiation of Sin by the Blood of Christ, to the eternal Redemption of Believers, and their free Admission unto, and Communion with the Heavenly *Jerusalem* and Church of the First Born, which are written in Heaven.

So

So the *Adoption*, which pertained to them by the *Legal Covenant*, (*Rom. 9. 4.*) It was *typical* of that higher Privilege of Adoption. By Faith in Christ Jesus (*Gal. 3. 26. & Chap. 4. 5.*) So the *Land of Canaan* was a *Type* of that better Country ; that is, The Heavenly *Canaan*. Thus the *Legal Covenant*, with the *Ministrations* and *Privileges* belonging to it, had but the *Figure, Shadow*, and dark Representation of those Heavenly Blessings, appertaining to the Gospel-Covenant, *Heb. 8. 5. & 9. 9. & 10. 1.* Understand these things spoken of the *Legal Covenant*, as distinguished from the Covenant of Grace, which was before it ; and as that which was to be abolished, to give Place to the Gospel-Covenant.

3. As there are *better things* promised in the Gospel-Covenant ; so they are *promised upon easier and better Terms*. Christ's Yoke is easie, *Mat. 11. 29.* He makes it easie to those that put their Necks under it. But the *Mosaical Yoke*, was an hard and heavy Yoke, *Act. 15. 10.* The Apostle calls it a *Yoke*, which neither their Fathers, nor they were able to bear. Tho' we come not up to the Gospel-Terms of our selves ; yet, when the former Covenant is called the *Ministration of Death*, and *Condemnation* ; the New Covenant is called the *Ministration of the Spirit*, and of *Righteousness*, *2 Cor. 3. 7, 8, 9.* And we under the Gospel, enjoy greater Means and Helps ; and the Spirit ordinarily is concurring, working with the Means in a greater Degree : Thus we have the Kingdom of God so nigh us, that if we fall short, we shall be found more inexcusable, than those that lived under the Law.

4. And tho' the Promise, or Covenant of Grace, that went before, be taken in with the *Legal Covenant* ; yet the Promises of the Gospel, as to Spiritual and Heavenly things, are much more clear and full, than those in the Old Testament. We have the plainest and fullest *Revelation* of the Will of God, concerning Mans Redemption and Salvation, by Jesus Christ in the Gospel : And, the Riches of his Grace so display'd therein, as they never were before. Hence Christ is said to have brought *Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel*, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* As the Gentiles had but *blind GuesSES* at the Things of the Life to come ; so the Jews also, had but dark Apprehensions of them, in Comparison of what we may have ; we, who enjoy the light of the Gospel, revealing them more clearly. Their Light was very small, comparatively to ours. Upon which Account, we are priveleged above many Prophets, and Righteous Men of Old, (as Christ told his Disciples, *Matth. 13. 17.*)

5. The Promises of the Gospel-Covenant are most sure and firm. We could not desire better things, than are promised in the Gospel ; neither could any Promises be better Confirmed, than the Promises of the Gospel, Confirmed by the fullest divine Attestation, *Heb. 2. 4.* Confirmed by the *Oath of God*, *Heb. 6. 17.* Confirmed by the Blood of Christ. The New Testament, or Covenant is Sealed with His Blood, *1 Cor. 11. 25.* The Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, *Heb. 13. 20.* All the Promises

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ses of the Covenant, all Covenant-Benefits, and Blessings were Purchased by his Blood. Thus if the Promises of the Gospel should not hold good, and firm, should they fail; not the *Heirs of Promise* only must be losers; but, even Christ himself, the *Heir of All things*, He should be a *great loser*. He should loose the Purchase of His most precious Blood. And so should loose the Honour of being an All-sufficient Saviour, of all those that come unto God by him. And should loose that Revenue of Praises, he expects from such, both here on Earth, and (more especially) in Heaven to Eternity. But certainly, it can never be, that he should loose what he so dearly Purchased. It can never be, that the Father should not make good what he Promised Christ in the *Covenant of Redemption*, or that he should not make good what he Promiseth us in the Covenant of Grace for Christ's Sake, such of us as take hold of the Covenant. It cannot be, that the Father should deprive his Son of his Purchase, whom he hath set at his Right Hand, where he is ever making Intercession. And is not his Appearing in the Presence of God in the Highest Heavens, as much as a continual pleading his Merits, a presenting them to God, to secure his Purchase, and to Ascertain the Performance of the Promises of the Gospel? As they are *all yea, and Amen in him*; as sure, and certain, as it is sure, and unquestionable that he is an All-sufficient Saviour.

And thus better Promises there cannot be. Promises of Pardon, of the Favour of God in Christ, and of Eternal Life and Glory. Surely, these are Things of the greatest Value, Things worthy of our highest Esteem. The Promises of the Gospel-Covenant, include enough to Answer the Necessities, and to satisfy the desires of our Immortal Souls. Here are given unto us, *exceeding great and precious Promises*. (as they are deservedly called, 2 Pet. 1. 4.) And thus it is most plain, that God, and Christ do Infinitely *outrival all Competitors* (Sin, the World and Satan.) Upon which Account, all that reject Gospel-offers, will see cause for ever to Rue their Folly, reflecting upon their wicked, woful Choice; considering when it is too late, how unreasonable, and brutish they were, to make light of the Favour of God in Christ, and Everlasting Glory and Felicity, (offer'd upon Gracious Terms) preferring the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, and worldly Vanities, that are of little Value, and so vanishing.

But the Grand Objection here is,

What are Sinners the better for such Promises? Or, what are they nearer obtaining the Blessings promised; while there are *such Terms, and Conditions required*, as they cannot perform of themselves?

Ans. 1. What doth the Ministry of the Gospel serve for, of what use is it? if there are no Terms, if no Condition requir'd of Men? Then might not the Apostles have spared their Pains in perswading Men? (2 Cor. 5. 11.) Then would not the Ministry of the Gospel be an useless, needless Office? Then might not Ministers for ever hold their Peace; and no more beseech Sinners, pray them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God?

2. Should

2. Should any one come to Sinners with such a pleasing Oration as this, Poor Souls, trouble not your selves concerning your State towards God, I have good News to tell you, That there are no such Terms required in the Gospel, as some talk of; but you may have your Sins pardoned, though you do not repent of your Sins: You may be justified by Christ, without believing in him, or accepting him by Faith, you may be saved by Christ without living in Obedience to him, though you live in your Sins:] What should we say, or think of such a one? Should we not look on him as a notorious Deceiver, as bad, or worse than the false Prophets of old, who were reprov'd and threatned for prophesying Peace to Sinners, *Ezek. 13. 10.* How contradictory were such Doctrine to the Gospel, which Christ and the Apostles preached?

3. What the Gospel requires, in order to Sinners being pardoned and justified (as Faith in Christ) is not a thing *purely, naturally impossible*, which *though a Man's Will was never so much to it*, yet he has no more Power to do, (was no more able to believe) than to mount up to the Sun, or to remove a Mountain. But Sinners *cannot come to Christ, because they will not*: Compare *John 6. 44.* with *Chap. 5. 40.* And as a Learned Man has it) *Be it known that unwillingness cometh not from a Physical impossibility, through the want of natural Faculties (as it is with Brutes) but from a voluntary Pravity, which aggravateth the Sin.*

4. The Lord hath graciously condescended in the Gospel to *as low Terms* as would stand with his Honour, and with the Honour of Christ (our Redeemer) and with our own Happiness.

1. As to Repentance. It would not be *for his Free Grace*, that Sinners should be saved, without any sense of their miserable, lost, sinful State; nor *for the Honour of his Holiness*, to save Sinners, while in Love and League with Sin. Nor would it be *for the honour of our Redeemer*, but rather would represent him as the Minister, Favourer, Abettor and Encourager of Sin. Thus when it would not stand with the Honour of God and Christ to pardon and save impenitent Sinners; no wonder that Repentance is necessarily required in the Covenant.

2. So for Faith in Christ. It is the Grace whereby we are interested in Christ, his Righteousness and Satisfaction: And how unreasonable it were for any of us to *expect Salvation by him*, while we *will not accept of him*! How strange, if we should have an Interest in him, while we reject and will none of him! 'Tis by Faith that a Sinner (in a sense of his Sin and Misery, and utter inability to help himself) flees for Refuge unto Christ, willing to be sav'd by him in his own way: And this is a Grace that *honoureth Christ and Free Grace*, without which there is no due Acknowledgment of either. So I pray observe it, If we would suppose a Sinner to break off his Sins, and lead a new Life, and do all that is required in the Covenant, as necessary

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to Salvation [*only excepting this acceptance of Christ for his Lord and Saviour*] and so rest in the same, as if that was a Satisfaction to God for his Sins, or enough to commend him unto God's Favour and Acceptance; *even this would spoil all he does.* And so (Methinks) this may shew the great and gross mistake of those that look upon the *in credere*, the act of Believing, or the performing of the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, as if it was accepted of God, *instead of a perfect fulfilling of the Law of Innocency.* Faith in Christ is *no such thing* as can answer to that Righteousness, which was the Condition of the Covenant of Works; but it is of this special use, that thereby we have an Interest in Christ's Righteousness and Satisfaction: So that Faith is *not instead of perfect Legal Righteousness*, but the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, as he is *made of God our Righteousness* (1 Cor. 1. 30.) according to his gracious Promise and Covenant, upon our receiving him by Faith.

3. Then as to sincere Obedience (which must be acknowledged an *Article of the Covenant*; for certainly without this none can be said to keep Covenant). How unreasonable were it for redeemed Sinners to be lawless, or left to themselves to serve their own Lusts? Surely, Christ would never have shed his most pure and precious Blood, but to *redeem us from Iniquity*, as well as from Wrath and Misery: See *Tit. 2. 14.* compared with *Verse 11, 12.* And as Mediator betwixt God and Man, *it became him to deal equally betwixt, and act for both Parties*, to be concern'd for God's Honour and Interest, and not merely for Sinners Indemnity. We should not have a thought that Christ would be *so partial* as to stand for Sinners Indemnity, without any regard to his Father's Interest, or any care to keep up the Honour of his Authority: Yea, we are so far from being freed by our Mediator from any Obligation to Obedience, that we are *laid under a further, a new Obligation.* We are bound to obey God not only as God-Creator, but as *God-Redeemer.* And when we were under a natural, necessary Obligation to yield perfect Obedience to God, as we are his Creatures: Is not here a clear demonstration of his Grace in the New Covenant, that for Christ's sake he will accept; yea, he will graciously, bountifully Reward sincere Obedience, pardoning the sinful defects therein, when perfect Obedience is still owing from us? And how unreasonable were it to desire a Freedom from serving him, whose Service is perfect Freedom? The holy and glorious Angels of Heaven account it so: And the Lord requires nothing of us but what is for our good; to reduce us from a state and course of Sin, to Holiness and a course of Obedience, is for our real Interest and Happiness. *Sin is the great Malady* of our Souls, is a great part of our Infelicity; as on the contrary, *Holiness is a great part of our Happiness*; and also a necessary preparation for the highest Happiness we are capable of: Our chief End and Felicity is the pleasing and glorifying of God. Without a sincere Desire and Indebour to please and glorify God here on Earth, no hope of our coming

coming to the blessed Fruition of God in Heaven: *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*: Not being meet for, or capable of Heavenly Happiness, without Holiness. Let us weigh things well and we should see the *Reasonableness and Necessity of the Gospel-terms*; * That we should not look for, or once desire lower Terms, or other Terms.

Though Sinners generally are so unreasonable to stand out, and most ungratefully refuse Pardon and Life offer'd on gracious Terms, yet there is *such Provision made for a certain number of Persons (God's Elect)* that they shall certainly, infallibly by *special and effectual Grace*, perform the Condition, come up to Covenant-Terms, that they shall not fall short, or miss of the saving Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant.

* Of the
Covenant
of Grace.
Propos. 12
p. 225. &c.

And 1. This *special Grace* whereby Sinners turn to God, come in to Christ, Repent and Believe is the *Fruit and Effect of electing Love*, or the Decree of Election: God's Decree takes in the means together with the end. 2 Thess. 2. 13. *Chosen to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth.* Acts 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed.* And thus Souls come to Christ, as taught, and having learned, and being drawn by the Father, John 6. 44, 45. And so it is spoken of as his Act here, Ver. 10. *I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them in their Hearts.* And Ezek. 36. 26, 27. *A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony Heart.— And I will put my Spirit within you.*

2. Yet we may not exclude Christ the Mediator from being the *procuring Cause* of that special Grace, whereby the Elect perform the Conditions or Terms required in the Covenant. As he died with a *special Intention* to be the Saviour of the Elect & *merito*, & *efficaciâ*, both to purchase Pardon and Life for them and to bring them on infallibly to Life. Christ died not for all alike; but that as surely as he became a Sacrifice, so certainly he should have a Seed that should believe, and that to the Saving of the Soul: That his Blood should not be to them as *Water spilt upon the Ground*; as to others that had Christ and his Saving Benefits offer'd, but would not receive him: See Isa. 53. 10, 11. *Christus moriendo genuit*; His Seed, the Fruit of his Death, the Travel of his Soul. What he gives as Mediator, he procur'd. Now he gives Repentance as well as Remission of Sins, Acts 5. 31. So we read, Phil. 1. 29. *To believe is given in the behalf of Christ*, for his sake. And his *making Intercession* for those that shall believe (*John 17. 20.*) implies his having procur'd such Grace for them, supposing his *Intercession grounded on his Merits*. And if Christ hath merited and procur'd no more for the Elect than for others (that is, only Pardon and Life upon their Repenting and Believing; but not that Grace, whereby they shall certainly Repent and Believe) then will it not follow that he hath done no more for those that are saved,

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than for those that perish? And so Peter should be no more indebted to Christ (the Redeemer) than *Simon Magus*.

3. The absolute Promises, where the first Grace is promised, do certainly speak of the Elect, and shall be made good to them: Thus the Election shall certainly obtain the invaluable Blessings of the Covenant, however it fares with others.

6. The first special Grace given to a select number of Persons, without Condition, yet is not ordinarily given, but in the use of God's appointed means. *Faith comes by Hearing*. The Spirit worketh Grace by the Word, as his Instrument. The Gospel is called *the Power of God* (the Instrument of his Power) unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, Rom. 1. 16. Not but that the Law is of use too in the Conversion of Sinners. As by the Law is the knowledge of Sin. Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known Sin but by the Law*. 'Tis a means to discover and convince of Sin, and to awaken and alarm Conscience with a Fear and Dread of the Judgment and Wrath to come. Thus the Law prepares Sinners to welcome and entertain the Gospel: And even by the Conditional Promises of the Gospel, the Lord is wont to work the Condition in his Chosen: As those were wrought on, Acts 2. 37, 38. and the Jailor, Acts 16. 30, 31. God worketh upon Men as Men; he draweth with the Cords of a Man; inclines our Hearts to necessary Duty (unto which we are naturally averse) by a powerful proposal and offer of the choicest Benefits that we have most need of, and that we can desire; not that a Sinners Conversion is the effect of mere moral swasion; but there is a special, spiritual Illumination of the Mind, and divine Traction, a gracious touch of the Will, such as make the same Arguments from the Word unto Souls that have them cogent and effectual, which are of no force with others. And this work is far unlike the motions and impressions *Enthusiasts* have, of which they can give no good Account agreeable to the Word (which is the special Instrument of the Holy Spirit) and to right Reason.

7. Notwithstanding the Lord vouchsafes not that special Grace and Help to others, which he doth to the Elect; yet all that continue Impenitent and Unbelieving under the Gospel, will be left without Excuse. Here take notice,

1. If God gives not that special Grace to them, which he did not owe to any, they can have no pretence to charge him hereupon with *Injustice*. If of his most free, superabounding Grace, he does more for his Chosen than for others, may he not do what he will with his own? *Negatio gratuiti beneficii* is an act of his absolute Dominion, no act of *Injustice*.

2. Whatever offers of Grace, whatever Means and Helps Sinners have tending towards their Recovery, is of God's free and undeserved Mercy. When Sinners could not have claimed the *shortest Reprieve*, is there not much Mercy here, that he offers them a gracious Pardon? They have a Conditional Pardon.

3. When

3. When any Sinner is *framing to turn* to the Lord, the Holy Spirit is ready to help him forward. He is following the Sinner with his sweet Motions and Counsels, even before the Sinner begins to look towards God, and Christ; and does not leave such a one, till provok'd by the Sinners neglect of him, or rejecting his help offer'd.

4. There is no Sinner, that can come forth and say, he hath not been *culpably wanting* to himself, in not improving the Means and Helps he hath, so as he ought, and might have done.

5. It is most *just*, that *special Grace* is denied to such, as will not *improve common Grace*, as they might. And that such froward and perverse Creatures, who oppose and *strive against* the Spirit in his *common Operations*, and preparatory Works, that have a tendency towards Conversion; that such Sinners should not have him at Work in his *special, saving Operations*. I have not the least doubt, but such Sinners will be convinced another Day, that when the Spirit was offering his Help, they did wickedly, wilfully slight, and reject it. What will such have to say for themselves, when their Consciences shall bear Witness, that the Lord was before-hand with them, that the Work did not stick at him?

6. Doth not the Current of Scripture run this way, that *God is not wanting to Sinners*; but they are wanting to themselves; and that the main cause of their not turning to God, and not coming to Christ, is *their own depraved Will*? They cannot, because they will not. *Prov. 1. 24, 25. I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my Counsels.— Isa. 5. 4. What could have been done more to my Vineyard, (or what was there to do, that pertained to my Office) that I have not done it?— God does for Sinners what becomes him to do, as Rector; tho' he does more for some, than he does for others, as Dominus Absolutus. Eze. 33. 11. As I live, saith the Lord God; I have no Pleasure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and Live, Rom. 2. 4. Or, despisest thou the Riches of his Goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the Goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance? 2 Pet. 3. 9. The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance. If Sinners could say so much, that they were willing to Repent and forsake their Sins; and willing to accept of Christ; what could hinder? Could any thing hinder a Souls coming unto Christ, that was truly willing to come? Matth. 23. 37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not! I would, and ye would not. Luk. 19. 41, 42. He beheld the City, and wept over it; saying, If thou hadst known even thou, at least in this thy Day, the things which belong unto thy Peace!*

7. When it cannot be denied, that a Sinners Condemnation, who lives under the Gospel, and hath Grace offer'd, and comes not up to Gospel-Terms, (I say *his Condemnation*) will be much sorer; and it is most

most certain, that *God's Judgment is just* ; it must needs follow, that it is *long of himself*, and thro' his own great default, that he doth not Repent, and Believe ; tho' he cannot do this of himself. *That Impotency*, which Sinners lie under here, is not such as will serve as an Excuse ; but on the contrary, *aggravates their Sin*. As *Jer. 13. 23.*

*Symonds As one, * " *The greatest part of the Impotency, and deadness of unre-*
Cure. p. 330. " generate Men is this, that they are *unwilling and averse unto God*. And
 † *Reconcil.* " as the Learned Mr. *Howe.* " † " Tho' they are disabled by their
 of *God's* " own wicked Inclination, even against that also, they have no cause
Prasceience " to despair of being relieved, if they would (which they might) ad-
 &c. p. 78. " mit the Thoughts of their Impotency, and the Exigency of their
 " Case, and did seriously Implore Divine Help.

Now to make some Improvement of this, that the Gospel-Covenant is Established upon better Promises.

USE 1. To Sinners. O that you would be perswaded to look after an Interest, an *actual Interest* in the Covenant, and its better Promises, its precious Promises ! If I could tell you of a great earthly Estate, that you might come to upon easie Terms, (as upon your thankful acceptance of the Donation from the Owner, and your carrying Worthily, as became you towards so noble a Benefactor, and your engaging not to abuse his Kindness, and Bounty, not to Embezel the Estate, when conferred on you, in riotous living ;) would you not listen to me ? Now an Interest in those exceeding great and precious Promises of the Gospel, is of more Value than whole Lordships, than the largest, richest Kingdoms upon Earth, than the whole World. O that you would not rest without making after an Interest in the Promises, which ought to be preferr'd above all Earthly Possessions ! How easy were it to fill ones Mouth with Arguments to urge this Exhortation ! But here I shall only lay these Considerations before you.

1. Consider what a *miserable State* you are in by *Nature*. As the Apostle mindeth the believing *Ephesians* of it, *Eph. 2. 3.* Ye were by *nature the Children of Wrath*, even as others. And *ver. 12.* Ye were *without Christ, being Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World.* We were all involv'd in Guilt by the violated Law of Innocency, liable to God's Wrath and everlasting Condemnation : Then surely there is no resting, no continuing in a natural State, under the Power and Guilt of Sin, as tending to everlasting Misery. Without an Interest in the Covenant of Grace, to take off the Sentence of Condemnation, that the violated Law of Nature layes you under, you are Miserable here, and for ever.

2. Consider *how uncertain your Estates in the World* are, and all your worldly Comforts. You have no sure hold of your Lives here, or of any your outward temporal Enjoyments ; Death is at your Backs, and will

will shortly strip you of them all. Think seriously what an *uncertain World* this is, and consequently how Miserable the Men of the World are, so how Miserable you must be if you have no other Portion, but receive all your good things here: How soon will all worldly things fail you, give you the slip, that you shall find them no more at all! But how *well provided* you should be for all Changes, Losses, Crosses in the World, getting interested in the Covenant of Grace, and the Promises and sure Mercies contained in it, 2 Sam. 23. 5. Hab. 3. 17, 18.

3. Consider in *how hopeful a way* you are to be happy, if you be not wilfully wanting to your selves. You that live under the Gospel, you to whom the Word of Salvation is sent, you have *Life and Death set before you*, Salvation brought to your choice: You have a Saving Covenant proposed to you, the things of your everlasting Peace and Happiness discover'd and offer'd; and *nothing but the perverseness of your own Wills* can cut you short, and make you Miserable: And what Means and Helps the Lord vouchsafes to you, that are proper in their kind to work on your Wills, to incline them to accept of such Grace offer'd!

4. Consider (what you have been put in mind of again and again) that your *final Despising and Rejection of Gospel-Grace* and Salvation would not only leave you to the Condemnation of the violated Law of Nature, but would further *heighten your Condemnation*, would greatly increase your future Anguish, Misery, and Torment. And be not offended at us for telling you plainly what will come of it, if you *receive the Grace of God in vain*. The Apostle Paul (a fit Pattern (no doubt) for Gospel-Ministers) says, 2 Cor. 5. 11. *Knowing the Terror of the Lord, we persuade Men*. And know ye this, that Gospel-Condemnation will be found the forest, most intollerable Condemnation. The violation of the Law of Innocency brought Man into a state of deplorable Misery, under God's Wrath and Curse, but *not remediless*, so as the *final Rejection* of the Covenant of Grace will do; as rejecting Christ and Grace offer'd, is *sinning against the only Remedy*; and thus Sinners deserve and incur a much sorer Punishment. And what can fill the Souls and Consciences of the finally Impenitent and Unbelieving with more tormenting Anguish, than to *reflect upon their wilful Neglect*, and rejection of the Means and Offers of Salvation, and thus turning the Word of Life into the Savor of Death unto Death: *This is the Condemnation, &c.* John 3. 19.

What Horror may take hold on serious Christians, to think of the general Security and Carelessness of Sinners, who are in a lost Estate by Nature, and will do nothing to purpose to get out of it, notwithstanding there is such a *Door of Hope* opened in the Gospel! Would not this argue a great Senselessness and Stupidity, as for one to *Sleep on the top of a Mast*, when a sudden blast of Wind may take him off and plunge him into the Ocean? Oh, what Madness so great, as for Sinners to be dancing on the brink of the bottomless Pit, when they should

should be hastning to the Rock of Salvation, and fleeing from the Wrath to come !

But here you may say, what is to be done in order to our having an Interest in the Covenant with better Promises ?

Ans. 1. You may not think of doing any thing to *merit* so great Happiness : How can that be, when the best of Men must (with *Jacob*) acknowledge themselves *less than the least of Mercies* ? There is nothing to be done to obtain, in a way of *Merit*, any Gospel-Benefits and Blessings ; that would make them not to be of *Grace* ; but they are all (from first to last) of *Grace* *.

* of the
Covenant
of Grace.
Propos. 11
p. 215. &c.

† of the
Covenant
of Grace.
Propos. 8.
p. 148. &c.

2. Neither can you do what is requir'd to an actual Interest in the Covenant, and its precious Promises, of *your selves*, of your own Free Will, or by your meer natural Power. *It is God that worketh in us to Will and to do* †.

3. Yet without a Penitent, Believing Acceptance of Christ (the Mediator of the Covenant) without a real, sincere consenting to the Terms of the Covenant, you can have *no actual Interest* in the Covenant, and the sure Mercies, the saving Benefits are not promised, but upon such Terms. But here,

1. It should not be denied, but Sinners in general have a *Conditional Right* (by the Gospel-Covenant and Promise) to Pardon, Justification, and Life : If they repent, if they believe in Christ, or whosoever comes up to these Terms, their Right and Title to these great Benefits is clear and unquestionable. And the Ministers of the Gospel have *Christ's warrant* to preach Repentance and Remission of Sins in his Name to all, and every Sinner to whom they preach : So much is certainly included in that Text, *Luke 24. 47.* So this is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation of every Sinner, to whom the Gospel is preached, [*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*] *To deny the Conditional offer of Christ and his saving Benefits to Sinners in general (or without exception) in the Gospel, is an unwarrantable contracting of God's Grace, and an unworthy detracting from Christ's Merits.* When we read, *John 3. 16.* *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* It would be a manifest depraving of that sacred Text (which is the *sum of the Gospel*) to turn it thus : *God so loved the elect World, that whosoever of the elect World believeth, should not perish, &c.* As if some of the Elect might yet fall short of Faith, and finally Perish. And as if there was no Love shewn to the lost World of Mankind, in God's giving his only begotten Son to be the Saviour of the World, that upon any Sinners believing in him, they should not perish but have everlasting Life : As if a *Conditional Pardon* offered to Sinners in general, were *no Act of Grace*, but only to those that so lay hold on it, as to be sav'd by it ; or as if no more Grace was offer'd in the Gospel to Sinners of Mankind (if non-elect) than to the Devils themselves ; that is, just none at all. And consequently, as if Unbelievers,

lievers, that reject Christ, should have this plea to make, that he was never seriously offer'd to any but the Elect: As if the Consciences of such would have nothing to accuse them of, and upbraid them with in Hell upon account of their Unbelief and Refusal of Christ.

2. As the Elect cannot know they are Elected till they are effectually Called, and come to Repent and Believe; so neither have they a *present, actual Right* to Pardon and Life by the Gospel-promise, till they Repent and Believe: Without Faith and Repentance there is no being Pardoned, Justified and Saved by the Covenant of Grace. That this is as a *plain Gospel-truth* which we must own, That no Elect Person is in a justified State, and a state of Salvation, while an impenitent Unbeliever: Therefore the *Gospel-Covenant is not unconditional*, or a mere absolute Promise. It *conveys a Right* to Pardon and Life unto all true penitent Believers, and to such only; but it *suspends a Right* to these Covenant-Benefits and Blessings from all, and every one, till such. (Here I speak of a present *actual Right*).

3. The Lord in *his Wisdom* hath ordered the Covenant to be thus *general and conditional*, as ruling in the *Kingdom of Grace* in a way *suited to Mans Nature*, as he is a *Rational Creature*. Thus by propounding and offering such Covenant-Benefits the Elect are brought (tho' not without special Grace) freely to consent to the Terms whereon those Benefits are promised; and would it not be very incongruous if *Grace and Glory* were *forced upon any against their Wills*? That influx of special Grace vouchsafed to the Elect, concurrent with the Gospel-offer, doth not offer any force to the Will, but inables them to *will and act freely* in repenting and believing: These are nevertheless their free Acts for their being excited and assisted by God's special Grace: And then as for others, who will not comply with God's gracious Offers, who voluntarily reject or make light of the choicest Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant, on such Terms as they are offer'd, who for their Lusts (they are joined unto, and will not part with) reject Christ, will none of him; *who can they blame but themselves*, that they die and perish in their Sins? They would have it so, they *have their own Choice*.

4. The *means both external and internal*, which Sinners under the Gospel are ordinarily priviledged with, are in their own Nature *adapted* to cure Sinners of that blindness of Mind, and hardness of Heart, the grand *Maladies that obstruct* their Believing and Repenting: They have *proper means* tending to their Conversion and Recovery (as these have such a blessed Effect upon many). The *supernatural Revelation* and discovery of the way of Salvation by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, the *express Commands* we have to Repent and Believe, and these back'd with the most *gracious Promises* on the one hand, and most severe dreadful *Threatnings* on the other; and these followed with the Spirits frequent *convincing* Sinners of their Sin and Guilt, and of the Wrath and Punishment due to Sin and Sinners, and with his sweet *Motions and Counsels*: Who can deny but these are *proper means* to work upon

* Blessed-
ness of the
Righteous,
P. 372.

such as have the *understanding of a Man*? Must it not shew the *wilful* blindness, and horrible senselessness and *perverseness* of those that are not moved with such means; but resist and withstand them all? And would it not *reflect upon the Wisdom and Goodness* of God, both to appoint these means, and to make it Sinners Duty to attend unto and make use of them, in order to their Conversion; if they were *nothing to the purpose*, if they had no tendency thereunto? Or was it ever known or heard of to this day, that any one Sinner was found out, who had *done his best to improve* the means of Grace he enjoy'd, and yet *all proved in vain*? As the Learned Mr. *Howe*, * "Canst thou say (though God hath not bound himself to the meer natural indeavours of his Creature) that ever any took this Course, and persisted with faithful Diligence, but they succeeded in it? See the Supplement to Mr. *Pool's* Annotations, on *Jer.* 18. 11. where Dr. *Collins* put to his hand.

5. Seeing Sinners *cannot be pardoned* and saved without Faith and Repentance, *neither can* they Believe and Repent of themselves without special Grace; it concerns them (sure) to *make the best use* they can of the Means and common Grace, as being the *ordinary Way and Method* of attaining to special Saving Grace. How sinful and dangerous is it for any to neglect the outward ordinary means God has appointed! *Luke* 46. 31. *Heb.* 2. 3. Do not such despise their own Souls? and despise God's great Mercy, *Luke* 1. 78. And may it not provoke the Lord to deprive such careless Sinners of the means, to remove the Gospel? And can they that *Sin away the ordinary means* of Salvation, or put away the means from them, hope yet, that God will bring them to Salvation in *ways extraordinary*? So again, how sinful and dangerous for any to make light of Convictions, to set at nought the secret Counsel of the Spirit, to quench his good Motions! Is not such a Course likely to frustrate to them all means of Conversion? As by vexing and resisting the Spirit, he may be provok'd to leave such froward Sinners to themselves, and cease striving with them: And is it not a plain case, that *their Destruction is of themselves*, who wilfully neglect the means, and will not do what they might, what is *within their power* (by the Help and Advantage of that common Grace afforded to them) towards their Conversion and Salvation? Though Sinners *cannot convert themselves*, it will not follow, therefore they are to *do nothing towards* their own Conversion: The Word says, *Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near*: And for one careless, presumptuous Sinner, that is suddenly (as in a moment) surpriz'd with special Divine Grace, and *snatch'd as a brand out of the Fire, like as Saul was* in the height and heat of his Rebellion and Opposition against Christ, for one Sinner brought in after such a manner there are multitudes, multitudes that neglecting and despising Means and offers of Grace, are left to themselves to fill up the measure of their Sins, and to bring upon themselves swift Destruction. As was said before, how sinful and dangerous

dangerous is it for Sinners to refuse to hearken when the Lord calls, and when he is coming towards them, to turn away from him! Surely God would not have Sinners *as Stocks and Stones*; he says to such, *Shew your selves Men*, Isa. 46. 8. and upbraideth those, *Isa. 1. 3.* as more sottish than the very Brutes, than the Ox and As.

Why hath God planted in Mans Heart a *natural Principle of Self-love* (I do not mean that corrupt Self-love condemned, *2 Tim. 3. 2.*) a *desire of his own Happiness*, a *fear of Destruction and Misery*, with *Hope*, to put him upon enquiring after the Way and Means of escaping Misery and Destruction, and of attaining Salvation and Happiness? And have Sinners no power at all to *search the Scriptures* by those Helps which God in his Providence affordeth them? Have they no power to attend on the Ministry of the Word, to wait at Wisdoms Gates? And are not these Duties requir'd of Sinners? Hath God appointed the Word to be the ordinary means of Sinners Conversion? And is it like to be so if Sinners turn away their Ear, and will not hear? Have Sinners no power to apply their Minds to understanding the plain and necessary points of Religion? And have they no power to work on them in their Thoughts, when understood? Have Sinners no power to reflect on themselves, to *consider their ways*? And are they not requir'd to consider, to search and try their ways? Have they no power to look before them, to think how bitter the end of a sinful State and Course will be, if persisted in? *Psal. 50. 22. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.* Are not Sinners justly reprov'd who will not lay things to Heart, but put away the evil Day far from them as if they were *made without Fear*? Was it without cause that Christ wept over the Sinners in *Jerusalem*, that knew not the time of their Visitation, and regarded not the things of their Peace? Had they no power to carry better than they did?

And have Sinners no power to pray at all for Grace and Pardon? *Simon the Sorcerer* was to pray, *if perhaps* the thought of his Heart might be forgiven, *Acts 8. 22.* Does not *natural Religion* teach Sinners in Distress and Danger to *call upon God*, and cry to him for Help and Succour? As we see in the Heathen Mariners, *Jonah 1. 5.* who reprov'd the Prophet there, *Ver. 6. What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God.* And if Sinners could, and would pray earnestly for Deliverance, when in Danger of Death; how is it that they cannot think it concerns them to pray for Grace and Pardon, when by the Light of the Word, the Spirit working with it, they may be under strong Convictions, and see themselves in danger of everlasting Condemnation? Prayer is one of God's appointed means that Sinners are to use and improve as well as they are able (praying for the Holy Spirit to help them to pray). The Lord having made many gracious Promises, *Ezek. 36.* as of a new Heart, and of putting a new Spirit with-

Christ the Mediator of a better Covenant.

in them, &c. Says, Ver. 37. *I will yet for this be enquired of by the House of Israel to do it for them.*

* See the Learned Mr Howes *Reconciliableness of God's practice, &c.* p. 141. &c. Some have imbibed such Notions as would make * God's Precepts, Promises, and Comminations meer Impertinencies, to signify nothing to Sinners unconverted; and the Faculties whereby they are capable of Moral Government, useless and vain (as to the highest purposes whereunto they should serve) and would have Men managed as meer Machines, that know not their own use.

But to Sinners who have any Sense of their sinful and miserable lost Estate by Nature, and begin to be solicitous about the Salvation of their Souls, I would offer a few Considerations, partly to quicken, and partly to encourage such.

1. Consider whether thou shouldst not fully conclude with thy self, that thy *grand Concern* is to get a Covenant-Interest in God and Christ, which would be certain and irrevocable upon thy Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, without which thou art most certainly Miserable, but with which thou shouldst be for ever Happy.

2. For as much as thou art not sure of thy Life one day to an end, consider whether it does not concern thee to set about this most necessary and important Business *without delay*. Though there is no turning to God, no coming to Christ without the help of special Grace, yet thou mayst do something *preparatory* thereunto by the help of *common Grace*. And if thou art under Convictions, and feelest some good Motions within, some good Inclinations, some Desires towards God and Christ; as these would shew the Spirit at work in thee; so is it not good to lay hold on any help he is pleas'd to offer, to set in with him?

3. Consider, that God and Christ is *serious in those gracious Calls and Offers* thou hast in the Gospel: And thou art as really concerned in the general Gospel-Call, as if the Lord called to thee by Name immediately from Heaven. Should any Man upon Earth, or an Angel from Heaven contradict this, thou shouldst not believe him, but look on him as a Deceiver.

4. Consider, such is the *gracious Nature* of God, that he hath no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his way, and live, you have his Word and Oath for this, Ezek. 33. 11. *Sinners displease God when they undo themselves; they please him when they return* †. Then if Sinners return be a thing pleasing to God, and thou art framing to turn to the Lord, thou shouldst not doubt of his readiness to help thee forward; yea, thou takest not one step towards him without his Help: Fear not his being wanting to thee, but rather fear neglecting to lay hold on his Grace and Help offer'd.

† Supplement to Pool's Annotations on Ezek. 18. 32.

5. Consider, Thou canst not make any Request unto God for things concerning thy outward Man, and this present Life, so likely to take, that thou mayst hope to speed in; so as if thou liest at his Feet, seriously and

and in good Earnest making suit for Converting Grace, for his Favour in Christ, crying hard for Mercy for thy Soul.

6. Though thou canst not lay claim to the Promise of the first special Grace, though thou art *not sure* that thou art *included in the absolute Promise*, yet thou mayst take Encouragement, there is a *great probability* of thy obtaining that Grace which is saving, if thou continuest seriously and diligently to seek it in that way, and in the careful use of those means wherein the Lord is wont to convey it. As that renowned Author (before cited) * God binds himself to do what he * *Blessed-*
 “promises; but hath he any where bound himself to do no more? *ness of the*
 “— If ever his Spirit have in any degree mov’d upon thy Heart, in- *Righteous,*
 “clin’d thee at all seriously to consider thy eternal Concernments, P. 305.
 “did he before hand make thee any Promise of that? And in another
 Tracts, † “Such as live under the Gospel have reason to apprehend it † *The Re-*
 “highly probable, they may obtain that Grace which is necessary to *deemers*
 “Salvation, if they be not wanting to themselves: For there is ge- *Tears, p.*
 “nerally afforded to such that which is wont to be called *Common* 52, 53.
 “Grace. — Now though this Grace is not yet certainly saving, yet
 “it tends to that which is so; and none have cause to Despair, but
 “that being duly improv’d and comply’d with, it may end in it.
 And again, * “That which is sufficient for the turning and changing * P. 118.
 “of thy Heart is usually not given all at once, but as gentler insinu-
 “ations (the injecting of some good Thoughts and Desires) are com-
 “ply’d with, more powerful influences may be hoped to follow. And
 Dr. *Manton* † (again and again) None lack this Grace but those that † *On Rom.*
 “forfeit it by Neglect and Contempt, and resistance of the motions of 8. p. 19.
 “his Holy Spirit. And elsewhere, || “This saving Grace is not given || *On Rom.*
 “to all, though all have many both *external* and *internal Helps* suffi- 6. p. 90.
 “cient to make them better. That any have his special Efficacy and
 “converting Grace, is the meer Favour and Bounty of God; if any
 “want it it is long of themselves, because by their Neglect and *Abuse*
 “of *common Grace* they deserve that want. So that Learned and sound
 Divine.

USE 2. To such as (through Grace) are come up to Covenant Terms, and have an Interest in its exceeding great and precious Promises. There are three great Duties incumbent on you, that I would lay before you.

1. To be much in admiring and praising the Lord for such Riches of Grace display’d and dispens’d to you. O Christians, how wonderful, that ever he should *pardon such Rebels*, receive *such Prodigals*, set up such *Bankrupts* as we were, who had lost all, spent all, had done enough to cast our selves out of his Favour for ever! How wonderful that he should extend so rich Mercy to us, who were so deep in Arrears to his Justice! Consider,

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1. Was it not of *divine Condescension*, that the most High vouchsafed to enter into Covenant with Man in Innocency? That he was pleas'd to oblige himself *by Promise* to his Creature, the Workmanship of his Hands, that he should live and be for ever happy, upon his retaining his Innocency, continuing obedient in all things, which was his *unquestionable Duty*, owing to his Maker, absolute Owner, sovereign Ruler, and great Benefactor, as long as he had a Being.

2. Then what gracious Condescension was it, that *after Man had broken Covenant*, the great God of Heaven and Earth should make and propose another Covenant to his Creatures, to sinful Dust and Ashes, that were fallen from him? That after Man had *prov'd perfidious* he was pleas'd yet to make another, and that a better Covenant; a Covenant of *higher Privileges and upon lower Terms*; what wonderful Grace is here!

3. And that he hath done this of his meer good Will and Pleasure, *without Mans seeking to him*, or interceding for it; though not without the *Mediation of Christ*; yet this makes it nevertheless of his Free Grace, as it was of his wonderful Free Grace to appoint and provide this Mediator for us.

4. And though the Covenant is not *without Terms* (as without Terms it could not be a Covenant) yet here are *no such Terms as are meritorious* of the Blessedness, or of the least Blessing promised in the Covenant; nor such Terms as we are to perform of our selves, by our own Power; but *it is God that worketh in us both to Will and to do of his good Pleasure*. 'Tis he, that of his Grace begins with us, and goes on with us, or we should never of our selves comply with his Terms; but our depraved wicked Wills would refuse to yield (to our utter Ruine.) 'Tis his Grace that proposeth and makes known his Covenant, that opens our Understandings, inlightens our Minds to see the things of our Peace, and opens our Hearts, inclines our Wills to accept of Covenant-Benefits upon Covenant-Terms. 'Tis by his Grace that we come first seriously and sincerely to enter into Covenant, and that we are enabled to keep Covenant: Thus *the work from first to last is of his Grace*. But remember, that the Lord ordinarily by *common Grace*, and its effects, prepares and makes way for the Operations of his Spirit in a way of special and saving Grace: And *his Grace worketh on us in a way suitable and congruous to Mans Nature*, (as Man is a rational free Agent;) as he useth to work on us by Commands, Promises, Threatnings, his Spirit concurring with them, and setting them home.

But Christians who are we, that the Lord should so graciously look after us, and shew himself so concern'd for our Recovery *as if his Happiness was bound up in ours*, notwithstanding our former most ungrateful, ungracious departing from him? O, should not such *Monuments of his Grace* be *Instruments of his Praise*, well-tun'd Instruments ever and anon sounding forth his Praise! Now methinks the Life of a true Believer, of one who is an Heir of the rich and precious promises of the

the Gospel should be a *Life of Praise and Thanksgiving* to the God of all Grace.

2. You that have a special Interest in the Covenant and its better Promises (the best Promises that ever were made to the Sons of Men) let it be your great care to hold and stick to the Covenant, to *keep Covenant* with God, and thus look to your own, *hold your own*. Here consider,

1. 'Tis most certain the Covenant cannot fail on God's part, and why should it fail on ours? He is the Lord that is faithful, a God that keepeth Covenant; what he hath promised he is most faithful to perform; the *God that cannot lie*. Then if we are his People, shall we not be *Children that will not lie*? (Isa. 63. 8.) Let us not deal falsely, but be stedfast in his Covenant. Be true to him.

2. Having given our Consent to be the Lords, we are *bound by our own Act and Deed*, to be his for ever: No renouncing our Covenant with God, no going back from it without horrid Impiety, Ingratitude, and Perfidiousness: What thoughts have we of such as care not to *break Covenant with Men*? Is it not accounted an odious thing? How much more hainous to break Covenant with God? What may the Lord say to such? *O my People, what have I done to thee? Wherein have I wearied thee? What Iniquity have ye found in me, that ye are gone far from me*, and have walked after Vanity, and are become vain? Oh, how shameful, unreasonable, unaccountable it is to break with him, to whom we are bound by millions of Obligations, who *has done so great things* for us, and hath also *promised such and such things*!

3. No evil in this World that can befall us, nothing that the worst Enemies we have in this World can do unto us, that we have cause to fear; so as we should dread declining from God, and dealing falsely in his Covenant: It cannot but be ill with our Souls when we turn aside from him; then we are off from our Center, then we *forget our resting place*, then we forsake our Sun and Shield, and estrange our selves from the Comforter that should relieve our Souls; from him whose Favour is better than Life. We are like thus to be at a Loss for want of his quickning and comforting Presence; what can we look for but that he should *hide his Face* from us here, tho' he should not *cast us out of his sight for ever*? The Lord hath other Penalties to inflict on backsliding Children (though short of everlasting Perdition, yet) more Smarting and Gauling than what they can suffer from cruel Persecutors: And though *Heb. 10. 38. Now the Just shall live by Faith*: But if he (for [*any Man*] is not in the Original, but if *he* (the just Man) *draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him*]; though, I say, that Text will not prove that a Justified and Sanctified Person may *fall away totally and finally* from Grace, any more than *Gal. 1. 8.* will prove that an holy confirmed Angel may fall from the Truth, and prove an *Impostor*; yet we must say, that supposing such a one should totally draw back, upon his total and final Apostacy,

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his utter Rejection and everlasting Perdition would follow. But the Scope and Design of this *conditional Threatning* is to deter us from the Sin; and 'tis a means to awaken a fear of Jealousy over our selves, a fear of Caution, a fear of the Sin, as we dread divine Displeasure.

4. Shall not the many choice *Promises annexed to keeping Covenant, upright Walking, an holy Stedfastness and Perseverance* be very prevalent to engage and excite us thereunto? To name a few of many, John 15. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you*: That is, supposing ye ask that which God in his infinite Wisdom sees to be good and fit for you. And what a full Promise is that, Psal. 25. 10. *All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth unto such as keep his Covenant*? So Psal. 103. 17, 18. *The Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him. — To such as keep his Covenant.* And 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Matth. 24. 13. *He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

5. Consider, you that are brought over sincerely to join your selves to the Lord, and thus have a special Covenant-Interest in him, though Adam in Innocency had far greater Power in himself to keep Covenant than you have, yet you have far greater, better Security for your standing in Grace than he had for his standing in Innocency: Though weak in your selves, yet you are kept by the power of God, through Faith unto Salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, Jude ver. 1. You have a special Interest in Christ's Mediation and Intercession. John 17. 11, 15. *Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me: Keep them from the Evil.* And he ever liveth to make Intercession for them that come to God by him: Yea, true Believers, real consenting Covenanters are his special Charge; and he is able to keep them from falling; and none shall pluck them out of his Hand. Further, there are special Promises of Grace to hold on and persevere, that belong to such. Jer. 32. 39, 40. Ezek. 36. 27. Heb. 8. 10. You that have taken hold of the Covenant, closing heartily with its Terms, you may warrantably apply such Promises: The Lord will not be wanting to you, but will afford you all necessary supplies of Grace; his Grace shall be sufficient for you to prevent your final miscarrying, to bring you to his everlasting Kingdom. And what can hinder your happy Progress in the way to it, if you grow not Careless and Negligent, so that you receive the Grace of God in vain in a great Degree; whereby the Lord may be provoked to leave you for a time, to try you, that you may see what is in your Hearts, and may learn to be more Humble, more Circumspect and Watchful for time to come. Mic. 2. 7. *Is the Spirit of the Lord strained?* — *Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?*

6. Surely, it would be worth all our Care and Pains in keeping close to God, fearing to turn aside from him, as this way our special Interest

Interest in the Covenant, in its precious promises might be cleared more and more to us: Ordinarily they that *walk most closely* with God, *walk most comfortably*. The work of Righteousness is Peace; that's one effect or sweet Fruit of it: Sincerity is a safe ground of rejoicing, 2 Cor. 1. 12. Rom. 14. 17.

But here some poor Soul may be complaining of it self, and questioning with it self, thus, Alas! What shall I do? I that have been *playing the Prodigal*, have gone away from my Heavenly Father. I that have *committed such Folly* as to estrange my self from the Lord Jesus Christ (my Head and Husband) *following after Strangers*, as carnal, sensual Pleasures, worldly Enticements, *leaving my first Love*. I that have sadly declined, have been guilty of great Backsliding: Or I that have fallen into such a foul Sin, wounding, wasting Conscience, which makes me question my State, whether ever I did truly Repent, and deliberately, resolvedly forsook Sin? Whether ever my Heart was right with God?

Answ. A sad case, I must confess, yet thou shouldst not lie down in Despair, nor give up thy self for a lost Creature, as if there was no hope in thy Case. But,

1. Thy *backsliding*, or *foul fall* calls for deep Humiliation, and a serious, solemn renewing of thy Repentance: As Peter after his Denial of his Lord and Master, *went out and wept bitterly*. Oh, remember from whence thou art fallen, and Repent! *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return.*

2. It calls thee to act Faith afresh on Christ, and to apply thy self to that *Fountain set open* for Sin and for Uncleaness. 1 John 1. 7. *The Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.* See Chap. 2. 1, 2.

3. It calls thee to a solemn renewing Covenant with the Lord, with a full Purpose and Resolution (by the help of his Grace) of returning to thy first Husband, and of cleaving closer to him for time to come.

4. And so to apply that gracious Promise which speaks directly to thy Case. Hos. 14. 4. *I will heal their Backsliding, I will love them freely.* So Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye backsliding Children, and I will heal your backslidings.*

3. You that have a special Interest in the Covenant and its precious Promises, see that by Faith you *improve your Interest* here, live by Faith on this full Covenant, and those rich Promises contained in it; these are a Christians *Storehouse* and *Treasury*; a full Store-house, a rich Treasury. Hence may we fetch *all needful Supplies* both of Grace and Comfort; here are all things pertaining unto Life and Godliness; we cannot reasonably desire more than the Father of Mercies, the God of all Comfort hath graciously promised; yea, we are not able to conceive or comprehend the great things included in the Promises, 1 Cor. 2. 9. Will you not say as holy David, *This is all my Salvation and all my Desire*? While a Believer *lives upon his Estate*, not beside it, *he is well*

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well to live, when others in the fulness of their sufficiency may be in straits (their Consciences fast in the Stocks) he may live fully, live comfortably, who hath such a Covenant, such Promises to live upon; tho' in outward straits. God's Promises are *proper food for Faith*.

To excite you to this life of Faith on the Promises, (1) This is the most excellent Life, you can live here on this side Heaven.

1. An excellent Life, as it greatly *honoureth God* and Christ: As we read of *Abraham*, Rom. 4. 20. He was *strong in Faith, giving Glory to God*. It gives him the Glory of his divine Power, of his rich Grace and abundant Mercy, and of his Truth and Faithfulness; it honour-eth Christ as having purchased and procured so great Priviledges, Benefits and Blessings for Believers, and made all sure to them, 2 Cor. 1. 20.

2. It is a Life most *pleasing to God* and Christ; as the contrary is highly displeasing to the Lord, (Heb. 10. 38.)

3. It credits, honours Religion: This is one thing that may convince Strangers of the Goodness of true Religion and Godliness, that there is more in this to support, uphold, and satisfy a sound Christian, than others can find in the World, in all their worldly Props, outward Comforts and Enjoyments.

4. This Life of Faith on the Promises is a *very rare thing* in the World; there are but few that attain to this way of Living.

2. This is the most *profitable way* of Living: *He that Trusteth in the Lord shall be made Fat*, Prov. 28. 25. Yea, the Souls of such are in good liking, are most thriving; 'tis *Soul-fattening Feeding*, this Living upon the Promises.

3. This is the most comfortable way of Living; such Souls may *dwell at Ease*, lodge in Goodness. Isa. 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace* (Peace, Peace.)

4. So methinks the troubled State of things in the World, the Times call on us to inure our selves to this Life of Faith: When the Times are *unpromising*, yet we may hold up our Heads still, living upon God's gracious Promises: O, this would keep our Hearts from sinking in the most discouraging Times, We may set *God's Promises* against all the *Worlds Threatnings*; yea, we should not regard much whether the World Promise or Threaten; if it Threatens, our God can turn the *Curse into a Blessing*: And he hath promised that all things shall work together for Good to his Called and Chosen: And what are the *Worlds Promises*? We have little ground to depend on them: The *Worlds Promises* are *Vanity*, or a *Lie*, which is *worse than Vanity*. But when so great a part of the World hath been cast into such violent Commotions, and woful Confusion, by *one Man's making nothing of Treaties, Promises, Compacts* (being as ready to break his Promises as to make them) 'tis comfortable yet for God's People to consider, that *his Covenant* with them *stands fast*, is an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure: His Promises cannot fail, he will not alter the thing that

that is gone out of his Lips; his *Mercy is everlasting*, and his *Truth endureth to all Generations*.

Of living by Faith on the Promises take these few Hints.

1. As we are sinning daily, should we not be daily acting Faith on the Covenant and Promises for Pardon? *Jer. 31. 34.* and *Chap. 33. 8.* *Mich. 7. 18.* *Heb. 8. 12.* There can be no such thing as the *Remission of Sins before they are committed*: We must *sue out the Pardon of our daily failings* by Faith in Prayer, even as we *beg our daily Bread* (according to Christ's Direction, *Math. 6. 11, 12.*) If we are to take this course to obtain the Pardon of Sins of *daily incursion*, then surely it cannot but be necessary in order to Pardon, after some *greater Ex-cursion* or Transgression, after any sore fall, or sad Relapse.

2. What need to be daily acting Faith on the Promises for the further weakening and mortifying of Corruption? As the Lord has promised to *subdue the Iniquities* of his People, *Mic. 7. 19.* He hath promised with the free Pardon of Sin, also Power against it: Where Sin is not *reigning*, yet it is *oft' rebelling*. Alas! Have we not cause to complain of rebellious Lusts, of rebellious Passions? &c. What need to look up to Heaven for help to suppress them? *Rom. 16. 14.* *Sin shall not have Dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.* Let not the hand of Faith hang down, but take hold of the Promise; thereby you may be hearten'd and encouraged in your Conflict with that Enemy you have at Home, your grand Enemy, and may have cause to thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for keeping Sin at an under at present, before you have an absolute Victory and Conquest.

3. While we are but weak in Grace, and of low Stature, should we not be acting Faith on the Promises for growth in Grace? *Job 17. 9.* *The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean Hands shall be stronger and stronger.* *Prov. 4. 18.* *The Path of the Just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* *Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7.* *I will be as the Dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the Lilly— They shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine.*

4. Are we not subject to halt or trip, or make a stop sometimes in a course of Obedience? Are we not sometimes listless and backward unto holy Duties, and sometimes *driving on heavily in the good ways* of God, (that should be to us paths of Pleasantness.) Then sure it concerns us to be acting Faith on the Promise for exciting, quickening, assisting Grace. *Ezek. 36. 27.* *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, &c.* *Phil. 2. 13.* *It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, &c.*

5. That we may not miss of the Fruit, the Blessing of holy Ordinances, we should act Faith on the Promises concerning them; as in that Psalm for the Sabbath-day, *Psal. 92. 13.* *Those that be planted in the House of the Lord shall flourish in the Courts of our God.* *Prov. 8. 34.* *Blessed is the Man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates.—*

Isa. 55. 3. *Incline your Ear and come unto me, hear and your Soul shall live.* Chap. 56. 7. *I will make them joyful in mine House of Prayer.* Jer. 31. 14. *I will satiate the Soul of the Priests with Fatness, and my People shall be satisfied with my Goodness,* saith the Lord. Isa. 12. 3. *With Joy shall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation.* (In the use of Gospel-Ordinances, *M. Pool*) The Ministry and Ordinances of the Gospel are the *Ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 8.

6. While we are sore annoyed with Temptations, so that sometimes we are ready to say that we shall one day perish by the hand of the Tempter, it greatly concerns us to make more use of the *shield of Faith*; and by Faith engage the *Captain of our Salvation* to stand with us, and strengthen us: *His Grace is sufficient for us*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. So it is good that by Faith we take hold on that encouraging word, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.* And Rom. 16. 25. *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet shortly.*

7. 'Tis very profitable and comfortable to act Faith on the Promises in reference to temporal Blessings, the good things of this Life, so far as God sees them needful and convenient for us; you that have a special Covenant-interest in God and Christ may know that *all things are yours*, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. and you shall not want any good thing. He that hath given you his Son, how shall he not also with him freely give you all things; you have the promise of the Life that now is, (1 Tim. 4. 8.) of what the Lord sees good and meet for you here. And what temporal Blessings you receive *in the way of the Promise* are far sweeter, there is *more of a Blessing* in them, than what others have merely *in the way of common Providence*.

8. There is great need of keeping Faith in exercise on the Promises in references to our Afflictions, Crosses, Trials here. As the Lord hath promised his Presence with his People, that he will *never leave them, nor forsake them*: That when they are *cast down* yet they are *not cast off*, *The Lord upholdeth them with his hand*, Psal. 37. 24. He has promised to support them: And when he corrects them it is for their Profit, Heb. 12. 10, 11. they shall prove Gainers by their worldly Losses, shall have a Blessing in their outward Crosses, Rom. 8. 28.

9. Again, should we not be acting Faith on the Promises for Perseverance? Many a sincere Christian is full of perplexing Thoughts, fearing they shall not be able to hold out to the end: But hath the Lord put his true fear in thy Heart? Then thou *shalt not depart from him*; thou hast his Word for that, Jer. 32. 40. If thou art a sound, a sincere Believer, thou art one of those who shall be *kept by the power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. when others draw back unto Perdition, the state of such is safe; they believe to the saving of the Soul.

10. And (not to expatiate further, as one might in multiplying particulars here) should we not be acting Faith on the Promises for everlasting

lasting Life and Glory ; would not this keep us from fainting, sinking, desponding in our lowest and most afflicted State here in this World ? 2 Cor. 4. 16. 18. Luke 12. *Fear not, little Flock, for it is your Fathers good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* John 3. 16. — *Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life ;* So verse 36. O what a joyful happy Life it would be (could we attain to it) to live in a constant believing expectation of eternal Happiness, and the Life of Glory.

But a few words further by way of Advice.

Take heed (Christians) of *misconstruing* Promises, or *misapplying* them. Take heed of *promising your selves* what the Lord hath not promised.

So for the *Conditional Promises*, be as careful to see that you have the *Condition* or *Qualification required*, as desirous to have the *Benefit*, the *Blessing promised* : Tis not Faith, but most gross and groundless Presumption to expect the one without the other.

Again, pray earnestly that the Lord would keep up, strengthen and increase your Faith ; *Faith and Prayer must help one another.*

And turn the *Promises into Prayer* : The Promises bring forth their *Blessings upon the Knees* of Prayer. The good, the sweetness of the Promises is to be suck'd and drawn out by Prayer : Prayer, and that *in Christ's Name*, is the *general Condition*, way, or means appointed by God for the obtaining of Mercies promised : See *Ezek. 36. 37.* with *John 16. 23.*

Again, Let Prayer be followed with *fitable faithful Indevours* ; sincere and earnest Desires will put Souls upon real Indevours, without which Prayer is but a *mocking of God*, and *deceiving our own Souls.*

Again, *pray and believe, pray and wait for Blessings promised* : As Grace and Mercy *makes the Promises*, *Wisdom dates them* ; they will bring forth at the appointed time.

Again, Look upon the Promises *as purchased by the precious Blood* of Christ ; and should not this both heighten our Esteem of them, and also encourage, strengthen our Faith in applying them ?

One word more, Attend duly on and improve that *sealing Ordinance*, the Lord's Supper. I am afraid that some neglecting those spiritual Meals, (Soul-fattening Feasts to such as come after the due Order, and improve them aright ; I say, I am afraid, that some neglecting Sacramental-seasons) may have Faith, and other Graces with it, very low and languishing : But a frequent, faithful renewing Covenant at that Federal Feast where the Lord is pleas'd also to Seal his Covenant afresh to every penitent, believing Receiver or Communicant is a *special Means* of strengthening Faith, a means to put and keep *Faith in good Heart* : And the better Heart Faith is in, the better able, the fitter we shall be to live by it.

USE 3. Another Use might be for Comfort. Here is strong Consolation for the Heirs of Promise.

What

What though you have little in the World, little in comparison of what many Worldlings enjoy, who have their Portion in this Life? Yet if you consider how rich you are in those exceeding great and precious Promises, which are all Yea and Amen in Christ; surely, you would not change estates with such; no, not for all the World.

But (alas!) while I find Sin so stirring in me, and my Heart so hard and so full of Unbelief, I may well question my Interest in the Promises whether they belong to me.

Yet if thou art no longer *in league with Sin*, if there is no known Sin that thou wouldst not part with, rather than hold fast, if 'tis the Grief of thy Soul that thou canst not get rid of it, and thou art praying and striving against it, be not discouraged. Sin is not always *strongest* where it is *most felt*: 'Tis well if thy former League with Sin be broken: 'Tis no *Article of the Covenant* that we will Sin no more, but that we resolve no longer to be *willing Servants of Sin*; and where Sin reigneth not, it shall not condemn.

As to thy doubting, whether thou hast a penitent and believing Heart, where thou findest so much of a contrary disposition, 'tis a good way, sure, (as others have taught) that thou *exercise and renew thy Repentance*, till thou mayst *feel that thou repentest*; so to put forth fresh acts of Faith on Christ till thou mayst *feel that thou believest* that thou heartily acceptest of him, as he is offer'd: So to give up thy self afresh to him, resolving most seriously, deliberately to be the Lords (by the help of his Grace) *at his command, at his service, at his dispose*. Following this course there is hope thou mightest sooner come to discern thy hearty Acceptance of the Terms of the Covenant, than by a continual poring on thy Corruptions and Defects (the practice of some weak Christians, to their no little disadvantage): And being well satisfied that thou dost heartily close with the Covenant-Terms, thou mayst safely conclude that the precious Promises, the Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant belong to thee: A blessed Portion. Thus mayst thou be satisfied with Favour, and full with the Blessing of the Lord.

F I N I S.

The Judgment and Testimony of the Excellent and Renowned Monsieur Claude, That the Gospel is a Law, a Law of Grace (as I had it lately in a Letter from a Friend.)

L *A Parabole de Noces expliquée en cinq Sermons, sur le Chap. 22. de S. Matt. jusqu' au Vers. 14. prononcez à Charenton l' An. 1675. Par Jean Claude. In the fifth Sermon, pag. 229, 230. he saith, (as what follows is a faithful Translation word for word).*

There are then Four things which make the substance of this Call, The *explication of the Mediation* of Jesus Christ, and of all the Mysteries dependent thereon; the *Command*, that we accept him for our Mediator; the *promise* of Remission of Sins, and of Salvation, for all those that shall accept of him in this Quality, and live answerably to their Faith; the *Threatning* of eternal Death to all those who shall reject him, or who shall not accept him in the manner appointed by God. These four things (you see) are of the *Essence of the Gospel*, as it is preached to us, and therefore I think we ought not to make any Difficulty to give it the *name of a Law*, since there is nothing more requisite to constitute the *Idea* of a true Law. St. Paul himself hath given it this Name in his Epistle to the Romans, where he calls it, *The Law of the Spirit of Life*. I grant that it is a *Law* very different from that of *Nature*, very different also from that of *Moses*; but however, 'tis a *Law* properly so called, a *Law of Grace*, a *New Law*, which God was at liberty to establish or not, a *Law*, which (however) he has been pleased to establish in favour of Sinners, a *Law that obligeth all* those to whom it is promulgate, to certain Duties; and which, whilst it thus obligeth them, exciteth them thereunto by the Hope of Salvation, and by the Fear of Damnation; in *fine*, a *Law* which hath its *Tribunal*, its *Judgment*, its *Sentences proper to its self*, and which *justifieth and condemneth*, which is the *Character of a true Law*. Thus that great Divine, of whom Mr. Tongue (in his Defence of Mr. H-'s Brief Enquiry, &c. p. 38.) says [*The renowned Monsieur Claude, whose Name will be great in all the Churches, as long as Piety and Learning have any Esteem among Men.*]

*Sixty Q U E R I E S propounded to such as deny
the Redeemers Evangelical Law, and Gospel-
Terms.*

Query 1. **W**HETHER the Term [*Gospel*] should not be taken and understood to mean the *intire method of Salvation* through Christ, and consequently to take in the Precepts as well Promises? And therefore whether it be not to trifle and amuse the World, for any to use that Term, resolving to mean nothing more by it than the Promises only?

Q. 2. When it cannot be denied but the Gospel is oft' called a *Law* in the Holy Scriptures, whether it is not a *flat Contradiction* to the Scriptures (the word of Truth) for any to say, It is a Law in no sense, it is *no Law at all*? Or whether any have a just Cause or Reason to be offended at our calling it a *Law of Grace*, a remedying or pardoning Law?

Q. 3. When the Gospel, which Jesus Christ himself preached, had a Precept or Command to Repent, and to Believe the Gospel, *Mark* i. 14, 15. and none can deny but a Divine Precept or Command is a Law; whether it can be true, that the *Gospel is no Law at all*?

Q. 4. Whether Dr. Owen be not in the right, as to the true meaning of the word *νενομωθεῖσθαι*, *Heb.* 8. 6. "*Established*, say we; but it is "*reduced into a fixed State of a Law or Ordinance*: All the Obedience "*required in it, all the Worship appointed by it, all the Priviledges "*exhibited in it, and the Grace administred with them, are all given "*(N. B.) for a Statute, Law and Ordinance unto the Church — This "*the Apostle intends by νενομωθεῖσθαι the Legal establishment of the New "*Covenant, with all the Ordinances of its worship, (Vol. 3. on Heb. p. 221.) And whether hence it followeth not, that the Gospel-Covenant is a Law?*****

Q. 5. Whether the Orthodox Christians of old would not have counted it very strange, for any professing Christianity, to deny the Gospel to be a Law, when it was part of *the Rule of Faith*, an *Article of their Creed* (as we can prove) in *Tertullian's* time, That Jesus Christ preached *the New Law and Promise of the Kingdom of Heaven?* [*Tertull. de præscr. advers. Hæretic. p. 100. Edit. Basil, 1550.*] And note, *Tertullian* wrote within less than two hundred Years after Christ, many hundred Years before a *Papist*, and many hundred Years more before a *Socinian* or *Arminian* was known or heard of in the World. They that have not,

or cannot consult the Author, may see the *Christians Creed* in *Textullians* days, translated in Mr. *Lorimer's Remarks*, &c. the last Page. Or in *Hammers View of Antiquity*, p. 151, 152.

Q. 6. When any of our *First Reformers* deny the Gospel to be a Law, whether are we not to understand them as denying it in a *Popish sense*, in opposition to their grand Adversaries the Papists? And whether it be not great weakness, or some thing worse for any to plead their Authority for an *absolute Gospel*, or Gospel-Covenant without Terms or Conditions, when they held the same Terms as we do, only *excluding any meritorious Condition*, as we also do? So *Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, &c.* And see the *Augustan Confession* (the first Protestant Confession of Faith) *Art. 20.* And were they not of our Reformers, who opposed the *Flaccians*, that denied there was any Precept in the Gospel?

Q. 7. Whether those Learned Divines of the *Synod of Dort* (who were *Anti-Arminian*) held not the Gospel to be a Law, and the Gospel-Covenant to be Conditional? May we not find there both the *Name* and *Thing*? As *Act. Synod. Par. 2. p. 104.* They distinguish betwixt the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of Faith*; and speak of the Latter, as binding to Obedience, where it is promulgated. And *Par. 3. p. 124.* They speak of the *New Law* and those that have it written in their Hearts. And *Par. 2. p. 101. Thes. 4.* In the Merit of Christ's Death (say they) is founded the *Universal Evangelical Promise*, all that believe in Christ, &c. And p. 102. they assert, That all the Impenitent and Unbelieving shall be convicted of Contempt, or at least of Neglect, *ob non impletam conditionem.* And p. 132. Faith is verily *the Condition of the New Covenant*, in respect of an *inviolable Order instituted by God, &c.* And p. 137. certainly the Remission of Sins and Eternal Life is *promised to all Men, if they Believe.* Here therefore it appears that a *Conditional Pardon* and Salvation belongs to all, &c. And p. 150, 151. Christ hath *merited for all, that if they Repent and Believe*, they may be reconcil'd to God, and received into his Grace and Favour: (And is not this the ground of the *General, Conditional Offer* of Christ and his Saving-Benefits to Sinners in the Gospel?) I suppose it needless to add more.

Q. 8. Whether such do not strangely impose upon their credulous Followers, who perswade, and make them believe, that the most, and best Divines (Ancient and Modern) are for the Gospel, or Gospel-Covenant being Absolute, without Conditions? Would it be worth the while? Would it not take up too much time for one to muster up all our Forces here? But see Mr. *Grail*, *Covenant of Grace, not Absolute, but Conditional.* Mr. *W. E.* having started this Objection, "But many good Divines call it a Conditional Covenant. Mr. *Grail* tells him, Sir, you are Meal-mouth'd; for not only many, but the most part of Divines call it so, all that I have ever met with, Dr. *Crisp*, Mr. *Saltmarsh*, and your Self (Mr. *Eyr*) excepted, (p. 57.) And thereupon shews Mr. *Eyr's* foul Play or Mistakes; and cites *Augustine, Ambrose*

brose (who has the Term *Law* too, *Hæc Lex* (Scil. *Spiritus*) *dat libertatem, solam fidem poscens*, in 2 Cor. 3.) and *Prosper* and *Chrysostom* (on Rom. 3. 27.) *Theodoret*, *Theophylact*. And of later Writers, *Martin Luther*, who indeed excludes Conditions of Worthiness; yet as Learned *Chemnitius* (a Follower of him) says, *Luther* was not against Preparations of Order, but only Preparations of Merit. And to prove it, cites him on *Gal. 3. 2* where he saith, That Christ's Coming profiteth neither the Careless nor the Desperate, but only such who have been terrified with the Law, and with sure Trust come to Christ. And Mr. *Grail*, p. 62, 63. citeth several Passages out of *Luther*, which are against such an Absolute Gospel as some contend for. So *Peter Martyr*, p. 66. And *Zanchy*, p. 75. And Dr. *Reynolds*, *Chamier*, with divers others. And Mr. *Jer. Burroughes* on *Hosea*: [*I will betroth them unto me*] He hath these words frequently, It must be mutual. And in his *Moses's Self-Denial*, p. 188. "Faith hath the greatest Honour above" all other Graces to be the Condition of the Covenant. He concludes with the Brethren in *New-England*, Vid. *Bulkley* of the Covenant, p. 280, 281. And the Catalogue of Errors that arose there, condemned by an Assembly at *New-Town*, Aug. 31. 1637. attested by Mr. *Welde*, Err. 27. "It is incompatible to the Covenant of Grace to join Faith" thereunto. Err. 28. To affirm there must be Faith on Mans part to "receive the Covenant is to undermine Christ. Err. 37. "We are" compleatly united to Christ before, or without any Faith wrought "in us by the Spirit. Err. 38. There can be no true closing with "Christ in a Promise, that hath a Qualification or a Condition expressed, Err. 82. They that condemned these Errors, doubtless, did not hold the Covenant to be without any Condition. These out of Mr. *Grail*. And Mr. *Benj. Woodbridg* (of Justification, p. 4, 5. out of *Wotton de Reconcil.* Par. 1. p. 99, 100.) hath many others, as *Fox*, *Perkins*, *Paraus*, *Trelcatius*, *G. Downham*, *J. Downham*, *Scharpius*, *Tho. Mathews*, *Calvin*, *Aretius*, *Sadeel*, *Olevian*, *Melancthon*, *Beza*. To whom he addeth these following, with their Testimonies, *Davenant*, *Camero*, *Whitaker*, *Rollock*, *Grotius*, *Bullinger*, *Musculus*, *Brochmand*, the Professors of *Saumur* in France, *Piscator*, *Wallens*, *Abbot*, *Wendeline*, *Bull*, *Pemle*, *Bayne*. So Mr. *Woodbridg* might well wonder at Mr. *Eyr's* accounting it a *New Opinion*, That Faith is a Condition of Justification; and at his charging it upon Mr. *Baxter* or Dr. *Hammond*, as the first Parents or Patrons of it. And they that would see more may turn to Mr. *Williams's* Defence of Gospel-Truth; where are, 1. Testimonies of sound Protestant Divines, that the Gospel is a Law. As of our Divines in the Synod of Dort, *Calvin*, *Wittichius*, *Willet* Synops. Papismi. *Steph. de Brâis*, *Tho. Hooker*, *Bulkley*, *Ball*, *Lawson*, Dr. *Wallis*, Dr. *Owen*, Dr. *Downham*, *Sedgwick*, Dr. *Jacomb*, *Charnock*, *Turretin*, Mr. *Mead*, Dr. *Ames*, Dr. *Manton* most frequently, *Akingius*, *Paraus*, *P. Martyr*, *Chamier*, Assembly of Divines, p. 31, to 34. 2. Testimonies, that the Gospel hath its proper Threatnings. Out of Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *Mead*, *Gillespy*, Mr. *Chancy*.

Mr. Chancy, Senior, Sedgwick, Synod of Dort. 3. Testimonies for Gospel-Blessings given upon Gospel-Terms. Of the *Assembly of Divines*, Fox, Synod of Dort, Dr. Owen, Dr. Manton, Mr. Charnock, Dr. Jacomb, Dr. Preston, Bulkley, Chancy, Senior, Rutherford, Mr. Mead, Sedgwick, Beza, Calvin, Clerkson, Fox, Gale, Gillespy, Bulkley, &c. (To which add what Mr. Flavel hath written for Conditions of the Covenant). See Defence of Gospel-Truth, p. 34, to 40. See also Mr. Lorimers *Apolo-*gy, where you have the Testimonies of Ancient Fathers, and Modern Divines. 1. For the Gospel being a Law, p. 24. to 32. 2. For the Conditionality of the Gospel-Covenant, p. 78, to p. 120. with more to the purpose, to be seen in his *Remarks*, &c. which the *Index* may direct the Reader unto.

Then are not such as contend for the Gospel-Covenant its being Absolute, without Condition, under a great Mistake, when they say, *If they are mistaken, they are mistaken with the most and best Divines?*

Q. 9. Whether they that would have the Gospel no more than a Declaration of Salvation by Christ, with the Absolute Promises, yet must not grant it to be *part of God's Law*, a Law in some sense? That *It is no Law at all*, cannot be true. Whether all that hear the Gospel are not oblig'd by it to believe it? Or otherwise will it not follow, *It is no Sin for Men not to assent to the truth of Divine Doctrine, &c. Revelation made known?*

Q. 10. Whether any *signification of God's Will*, concerning what he requires of us, as our Duty, be not a Law? And whether there be not such a signification of his Will in the *Conditional Promises* of the Gospel? And what reason or warrant hath any one to say here, that any such signification of God's Will is a Law *except in a Promise?* Might not an Heathen with as much reason say, Any signification of God's Will concerning what shall be the Duty of his Creatures is a Law, *except in his Works*, and thus cut off the whole Law of Nature at one stroke; that God should have no such Law, any further than it should be signified and made known to Men, either by Voice from Heaven, or immediate Revelation, or by his written Word?

Q. 11. Whether the Gospel hath not all that is Essential to a Law, to make it so? Whether hath it not *Precepts of its own*, originally and necessarily belonging to it, inseparable from it; together with a *Sanction* annex'd thereunto? as *Mark 16: 15, 16. &c.* Is it not a meer Evasion, rather than a sober Answer, to say here, That *the Gospel useth all the Commands of the Law for its own Ends*; when to Believe in Christ, as our Redeemer, and to Repent Evangelically are not *originally* or *primarily* Precepts of the Law, but of the Gospel; and so necessary a part of Christ's Gospel, that the Apostles had been unfaithful, had not discharged their Commission if they had preached an Absolute Gospel, leaving out these Precepts? Would it not have been directly contrary to Christ's charge there? *Mark 16: 15, 16. Luke 24: 47.*

Queries to such as deny the Gospel-Law.

Q. 12. Whether such Texts as 2 Cor. 9. 13. Rom. 1. 5. and Chap. 6. 17. and Chap. 16. 26. do not prove that there hath been, is, or may be such a thing as *Subjection* and *Obedience* to the Gospel? And whether there can be such a thing, if the Gospel hath no Precept, and is no Law? Whether this excludes not the formal reason of Subjection and Obedience?

Q. 13. Whether many shall not be condemn'd for not obeying the Gospel, as 2 Thess. 1. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 17. And how can any be guilty of Disobedience here, or transgress against the Gospel, if it be no Law? Where there is no Law there is no Transgression.

Q. 14. Whether Heb. 5. 9. proves no more, than that all that are saved by Christ, do obey him: Saved by him, and then obey him? Are Men Saved with eternal Salvation (of which the Text speaketh) before they obey him, when Destruction is threatened to every Soul that will not hear and obey him? Acts 3. 23. May any expect Salvation from him while they do not, will not obey him? See Isa. 55. 3.

Q. 15. Whether Christ, as our Redeemer, be not King, as well as Prophet and Priest? And whether Christ, as King, be not *Nomothete* a Lawgiver? And whether Legislation, or giving Laws be not an essential part of the Regal Power, or Kingly Office of Christ? Or Royalty, ther it be not a robbing him of a main essential part of Royalty, as Lord Redeemer, to assert, that he hath no Law, as Mediator, or Redeemer, but only the Moral Law, as God and Creator? And whether this be not contrary to the Assemblies larger Catechism. *Q. Why was our Mediator called Christ?* *Ans.* — Because he was anointed — and fully furnished with all Authority and Ability to execute the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, &c. — *Q. How doth Christ execute the Office of a King?* *Ans.* — In calling out of the World a People to himself, and giving them Officers, Laws, &c.

Q. 16. Whether it be not essential to true Saving Faith to receive or accept of Christ intirely, or to accept of whole Christ; and therefore to accept of him as Lord and King, as well as Prophet and Priest? And whether receiving Christ as King doth not necessarily imply a Consent to be subject to him, to be ruled by his Laws? And if he hath no Law, as Redeemer, whether will it not follow that as Redeemer, he is no King? And then whether holding this practically, that Christ as Redeemer, hath no Laws, and is no King, be not inconsistent with that Faith, which is necessary to Salvation? And whether were it not unsound, dangerous Doctrine, tending to promote Presumption, Hypocrisy, and a false Faith; should any say in plain Terms, that Christ is not a King, who hath Laws to be obey'd; nor are we to receive him as King, under that Notion of Redeemer?

Q. 17. Whether it may not justly be reputed strange Doctrine, for any to affirm, and teach, that Christ preached the Law. Mark 1. 15. Repent ye, and believe the Gospel; when (Ver. 14.) the Holy Evangelist calleth it preaching the Gospel? Whether doth it not sound very harsh

harsh for any so plainly to contradict the Evangelist, and say, No; Jesus did not preach the Gospel here? *Repent ye, and Believe* are Precepts; and all Precepts belong to the Law, not to the Gospel?

Q. 18. Whether it may not seem wonderful strange, or be not plainly unaccountable, that one should deny Christ to have any special Law, as Redeemer, because *that would make him such a King, as is not Pater subditorum* (may it not be translated, or paraphras'd, more like a Tyrant than a Father to his Subjects?) *requiring what he knows is impossible*; and at the same time to affirm, That *all the Moral Laws are his, by which he rules the World and Church*? Is it more possible for his Subjects to yield perfect Obedience to all the Commands of the Moral Law, or Law of Nature, than sincerely to obey the special Precepts of the Gospel? Or is it any more than *morally impossible* for a Sinner to Believe and Repent (that is, from a depraved Will, when yet the Lord, with those Gospel-Commands, vouchsafeth other proper means tending to cure that depravedness of Will?) Whereas it is *more than morally impossible* for a Sinner to yield perfect, sinless Obedience to all the Commands of the Moral Law. Or is it only impossible for a Sinner to Believe and Repent, if requir'd by special Gospel-Precept to do so; but not impossible, if only required by the Moral Law? Or if the Moral Law requires of Sinners what is impossible, then must not such a one (for the same reason) deny, that the Moral Law is Christ's Law, (and thus he shall have no Law at all) *because this would make him such a King as is not Pater subditorum, requiring what he knows is impossible*?

Q. 19. Whether an *Act of Grace or Indemnity*, that pardoneth Rebels (condemn'd by the old *Statute Law*) if they come in within a time prefix'd; I say, whether this be not properly a *Law* (even according to the common Sense and Judgment of Mankind in general, and not only of Lawyers) as well as the old *Statute Law*, that would condemn them, were it not for this *pardoning Act*; upon which account may it not fitly be called a *Remedying Law*? And what reason can be given, why the Gospel in like manner may not be called a *Law of Grace*, a *Remedying Law*, as pardoning Sinners, if they come in (Believe, Repent) within the time of their *Probation* or Trial in this Life? And what colour of reason for any to say, that a *Law of Grace* is a *Contradiction*, where the Terms requir'd are very gracious Terms; and such as it would not be for the Honour even of Free Grace it self, not to require?

Q. 20. Whether the *Law of Nature* (though it oblige us to believe whatever God should at any time reveal, and to observe whatever he should Command) can yet be said to require our believing in Christ, as Mediator and Redeemer, *in order to our being justified and sav'd by him*? While it was not, and never would have been our Duty, had it not been made so by the Gospel: And whether the *otherwise-minded* dare say, that *the Devils* (who are under the above mentioned Law of Nature, as well as we) *are obliged to Believe in Christ for Salvation, as we are*?

Q. 21.

Queries to such as deny the Gospel-Law.

Q. 21. Whether Believers themselves are not obliged to yield *perfect Obedience* to, and by the *Law of Nature*, as the Rule of Righteousness; so that perfect Obedience is *their Duty* (though *not the Condition*, without which Life and Salvation cannot be had, yet) whether they Sin not, wherein soever they fall short of, or transgress the Law, the Rule of Righteousness? Then will it not follow, that *unless the Redeemer hath a special Law of Grace*, according to which the *sincere Obedience* of the Faithful (though imperfect) is acceptable to God, and (of his Grace) rewardable, for Christ's sake; the Obedience of the most eminent Saints on Earth would never pass for Obedience, as there is not a Just Man upon Earth, that doth good, and Sinneth not? Though as *sincerity*, considered *formally*, is a *part of Perfection*, and so is required in the Law; yet as it is found in us, and contra-distinguish'd from perfect Obedience: Will any say, that the Law would take up with it? Doth *that Law which threatneth Punishment*, as due for every the least Offence, or sinful Defect, *promise any Reward* to imperfect Obedience? Hath the Law of Nature, as fallen Mankind is under it, any promise of Life unto such Obedience? Whether is it not, as the Redeemer takes the Law of Nature into his *Remedying Law*, or *Covenant*, of Grace, that perfect Obedience is still our Duty; and yet *sincere Obedience*, with indeavours after Perfection is *the Condition*, which (for Christ's meritorious Righteousness) hath the Promise of God's gracious Acceptance, and a blessed Reward? As Dr. Owen, (though I have forgotten to note the Place where) "In the Covenant of Grace God hath provided for the Acceptance of sincere, though imperfect Obedience, which the Law had no respect to. And let it be considered, whether there are not many promises to sincere Obedience, as Rom. 2. 7. Gal. 6. 16. Heb. 5. 9. Rev. 22. 14. &c. And whether there be not a Law of Grace in such Promises? Whether such *Conditional Promises* be not a Law, as *constituens debitum, vel officium creaturae*, as signifying the Will of our Supreme Ruler, constituting our Duty; and as *constituens jus*, as giving a Right and Title to that Blessed Life, which (of his rich Grace) he hath so promised?"

Q. 22. Whether these are not Gospel-Promises, Matth. 5. 3. &c. *Blessed are the poor in Spirit — Blessed are they that Mourn — Blessed are the Meek — Blessed are they that Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, &c.* Will any say that these are Promises of the Law? Then will it not follow that *Blessedness comes by the Law*? When the Law of Innocency had no such Promise; and the Law of Nature, that Sinners are under, while it requires perfect Obedience of us *pro futuro*, it hath no promise for us, as being imperfect, guilty Creatures. If these are Gospel-Promises then is it not plain, that the Gospel is *Conditional*, that there are certain Qualifications, Conditions, Duties required in it, in order to our partaking of the promised Blessedness?

Q. 23. Whether is it not evident, that the Redeemer hath a *special Law*, diverse from the Law of Nature, upon such Accounts as these, viz.

viz. The Law of Nature condemns every Transgressor for every Sin, whereas we find (according to the tenour of the Gospel) Sinners condemned only for final Impenitency and Unbelief: Again though the Law of Nature condemns every Transgressor for every Sin; yet not so peremptorily, as absolutely to exclude Sinners from all hope of Pardon and Salvation; but the Gospel most peremptorily condemns Sinners for final Impenitency and Unbelief, passeth an irrevocable Sentence on them for these Sins in special, excluding all Hope or Possibility of obtaining Pardon. What it is but a Law that condemns? And is it the same Law that condemns peremptorily, and not peremptorily? Or that admits of a Pardon and Remedy, and admits not of any such thing?

Q. 24. When Christ hath threatned Death eternal to Sinners that live under the Gospel, if they believe not in him, and that for, or because of their Unbelief, John 3. 18. Whether can it be sound Doctrine for any to teach, that *this* *Wo* is not denounced against Sinners for their not believing; but as due unto them for their not having perfectly obeyed the Law of Works? And if Faith in Christ be a Duty required in the Law (as they say) then will it not follow, that Unbelief is a Sin, a Transgression of the Law? And if Unbelief be a Sin, how is it possible but Unbelievers must be condemn'd for that, even as for their other Sins, whether the Gospel be a Law or no?

Q. 25. Whether such as deny that the Gospel hath any Threatnings of its own, and yet grant, that it binds their Sin, and binds the Almighty's Wrath, and their own Misery upon their Souls, John 3. 8, 18, 36. (whether such) do not plainly contradict themselves? What is it but a Threatning that bindeth Wrath and Misery on the Souls of Sinners? And how will this stand with another Principle of theirs, that the Moral Law is the only (*Norma Judicii*) Rule of Judgment? (which yet withal is directly opposite to James 2. v. 12. compare Rom. 2. 16.)

Q. 26. Whether this (as some say) be the main and essential Difference betwixt the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, that the Covenant of Works requireth something as a Condition of Life; but in the Covenant of Grace Faith and Repentance are its Blessings, and are given, and then required as Duties? If these are then required as Duties in the Covenant of Grace, is it not then a Law when it requires these Duties? But if these are not required as Duties, before they are given, then will it not follow that Sinners are here furnished with this Plea, or fine Excuse for their great Sins of Impenitency and Unbelief, *viz.* Lord hadst thou given me those Graces, then had I Repented and Believed; but seeing they were not given me, they were not required of me as Duties. Yet seeing God commandeth all Men every where to Repent, Acts 17. 30. Must it not follow by necessary Consequence, that either God has given that Grace to all Men every where, or that it is not their Duty to Repent, even though God has Commanded it? So when we read, 1 John 3. 23. This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.— Whether can it be right and sound, to say, That this

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this command obligeth none but Believers, such as have the Grace of Faith already given them?

Q. 27. Then whether this is not rather the essential Difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, viz. That the Covenant of Works spake on this wise to Man in his Primitive State [*Do this and live*] i. e. Obey me (thy Creator, Owner, and Rector) perfectly, and constantly in all things, by that power of Nature intire, thou art endued with, and thou shalt Live and be Happy, even for thy own perfect, personal Righteousness and Obedience: Whereas the Covenant of Grace speaketh otherwise [*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*] i. e. Though thou art a guilty Creature, by Sin obnoxious to the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, yet upon thy Penitent, believing Acceptance of Christ (by the help of that Grace offer'd, which thou art bound to seek, and to use thy utmost Indeayours to obtain, and shouldst not Despair of obtaining, using the Means, following the Method prescribed in the Word, thereupon) thy Sins shall be pardoned, and thy Soul saved (not for thy Faith, Repentance, nor following Obedience; not for any Righteousness inherent in thee, nor wrought, performed by thee, but) only for the meritorious Righteousness of another; that is, of Christ, the Mediator, and Redeemer. Whether is there not a wide Difference betwixt the Terms and Tenour of these two Covenants: As for an Innocent Person to be justified (without any thing of Pardon) and rewarded even for his own perfect Righteousness, and sinless Obedience, performed by his own natural Power; and for a fall'n guilty Creature to be Pardoned, Justified, and Saved, upon his Repentance and turning to God, and Faith in a Mediator (by the help of supernatural Grace) not for his Repentance or Faith, or any Righteousness of his own, but only for the meritorious Righteousness of the Mediator, imputed to him upon such Covenant-Terms?

Q. 28. Whether we must deny that there are any Gospel-Terms or Conditions in the Covenant of Grace, in order to the obtaining of subsequent Benefits and Blessings; or otherwise, though we deny the word [*Merit*] yet we establish the Thing? Whether all Conditions in Covenants, or Promises, work as meritorious Causes? Yea, whether a Condition *quà talis*, be any proper Cause, or doth any more than only suspend ones actual Right and Title to the Benefit promised, till it be perform'd; and take off that suspension, or remove what hindred the Promise, its conveying a present actual Title to the Benefit, when the Condition is perform'd? If a rich Man promiseth a poor Man twenty Pounds, if he will but come to his House, and thankfully receive it; whether will any Man of common Sense say, that thus he doth Merit the twenty Pounds, that it is no Free Gift? And whether the Graces of Faith and Repentance, in their very nature be not such as directly tend to humble Sinners, and forbid their establishing any Righteousness of their own, as co-ordinate, or of the same kind with the Righteousness of Christ, for the Merit whereof alone they are Pardoned, Justified, and Saved?

Q. 29.

Q. 29. Whether to assert, That we are not to believe in Christ, nor to repent, nor to pray (as that will follow) *in order to the obtaining of Gospel-Blessings*, be not contrary to the most obvious and plain Sense, Scope, and End of the Gospel, in calling and encouraging us to Believe, Repent, and Pray? As Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth shall be saved.* Acts 3. 19. *Repent — that your Sins may be blotted out.* Rom. 10. 13. *Whosoever shall Call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be Saved.*

Q. 30. Whether such as hold, That the Gospel requires no Duty *in order to the obtaining of Gospel-Blessings*, must not also hold the *Sixth Antinomian Error*, condemn'd or disclaimed by the Congregational Ministers, in their Declaration, p. 8. "That they must do no good Work" or Duty for their own Benefit, nor *with an Eye to their own Salvation?*

Q. 31. Whether the *Assembly of Divines* do not plainly assert, and with those Scriptures set down in the Margent, prove the Covenant of Grace to be Conditional? *Confession*, Chap. 7. §. 3. — The Covenant of Grace, wherein he freely offereth unto Sinners Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ, *requiring of them Faith in him, that they may be Saved.* And *Larger Catechism*, Answer to Qu. 32. The Grace of God is manifested in the Second Covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to Sinners a Mediator, and Life and Salvation, and *requiring Faith as the Condition* to Interest them in him, &c.

Q. 32. Whether according to the *Savoy-Confession* (concurrent with the *Assemblies Confession*) Faith be not requir'd in the Covenant of Grace, and that in order to Justification, and the greatest Gospel-Blessings? Chap. 14. §. 2. "The principal Acts of Saving Faith are "Accepting, Receiving, and Resting upon Christ alone for Justification, Sanctification, and Eternal Life, by virtue of the Covenant of "Grace. Was it the meaning of those Brethren of the Congregational Perswasion, that drew up that Confession of Faith, That the *Covenant of Grace doth not require Faith*; that is, an Accepting, Receiving, and Resting upon Christ alone for *Justification and Salvation?* If so, why then do they call it *Saving Faith?* Or was it not their meaning, That the Covenant of Grace *doth require this Faith* for Justification and Salvation, that there is *no Justification or Salvation of Adult Persons without it?*

Q. 33. If there are no such *Terms or Conditions* in the Covenant of Grace, as Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, required as *antecedently necessary* to Sinners being Pardoned, Justified, and Saved; then whether will it not follow, That a Man could not be *justly charged with preaching an Error*, who should tell Sinners that they may be Pardoned, Justified, and Saved without their Repenting or Believing in Christ, (there being no such Terms required, as antecedently necessary?) And yet whether this is not *contrary to the Gospel* which the Apostles preached, and were commanded by Christ to preach? And whether such Doctrine could have a *benign Aspect or Influence upon*

Holiness? Or rather would it not open a wide Door to sinful Security, Licentiousness, and Wickedness?

Q. 34. Whether is not the Holy Scripture plain and express for our being *Justified and Saved by Faith*, (if ever we be Justified and Saved?) Who can deny this, unless he be minded to *out-face* plain Scripture? See *Rom. 2. 28.* and *Chap. 5. 1.* *Gal. 2. 16.* *Acts 16. 31.* *Eph. 2. 8.* And then whether any can have a Face to say, That *Faith* of it self doth justify and save a Sinner, *without any Divine Constitution?* If by Divine Constitution, then whether *by the Law*, or *by the Gospel?* (Or let Men name a Third.) Only with the *Gospel* we must take in the Covenant of Grace, by which the Faithful of old were Saved, as *the same for Substance*, *Gal. 3. 8.*) Now *the Law* requiring perfect personal Obedience, and *condemning a Sinner* for every, or any Transgression; how is possible that a Sinner should be *Justified by Faith, according to the Law?* Then must it not be by the *Gospel-Constitution?* Yea, is it not thus indeed, That *according to this gracious Constitution*, Sinners have an *Interest in Christ* and his Righteousness to their *Justification before God*, and so a Title to Eternal Life, *upon their believing Acceptance of Christ?* Thus if Men will not (point-blank contrary to express Scripture) deny Justification and Salvation by Faith, nor yet *assert Justification by Faith of it self*, as a Work of the Law; will it not follow, That we are Justified and Saved by Faith, *as required in the Gospel*; and consequently, That the Gospel, or Gospel-Covenant is *not Absolute*, (without any Terms or Condition;) but *Conditional*, requiring Faith in Christ to Sinners Justification and Salvation? And then further, Whether it will not be found a perverting of the Gospel, or *preaching another Gospel*, for any to offer Christ and his Saving Benefits to Sinners, *as Sinners*, excluding all Terms or Conditions?

Q. 35. Whether *asserting*, That the Gospel hath any *special Precept of its own*, as requiring Faith in Christ, &c. *makes the Law of Nature* (the Law of God, *imperfect?*) Do they that urge this, as an Argument, look well about them? Would it not *prove more than they would have*, if valid? Would it not take away God's Power, and the Redeemers Power of giving forth any *new positive Precept?* If nothing is to be done but what the Law of Nature requires, and there is no Sin but what the Law of Nature it self forbids, then may we not *set aside all the positive Precepts and Institutions* of our Lord Jesus Christ? Then what would become of a Gospel-Ministry, and Baptism, the Lord's-Supper, &c. So might they not *set up the First Commandment* as the *whole, and only Law of God*, and cut off the Nine following Precepts of the Decalogue at one stroke? For might they not say as well, To add other Commands to the First, would make it imperfect? But the *First Commandment is perfect*; for it is *Holy, Just, and Good*. May we hence argue, Therefore there are no other Precepts to be added or admitted; for that would be to accuse it of Imperfection? And when some say, That the Law is the *invariable, unalterable*

unalterable Standard of Righteousness as to Persons and Things in all Ages; will they say, and prove, that the Law of Nature, as fallen Man is under it, varieth not at all from what it was to *Adam* in Innocency? When *that might have served his Turn*, to lead him on to Righteousness and Life: Will they say, That Man fallen may attain to Righteousness and Life by the Law, as he might have done? Contrary to *Rom. 8. 3.* Or will they say, That the *preceptive part of the Law of Nature* was the same to Man in Innocency, and to Man Fallen? Did it not require Man in Innocency to *preserve his Innocency*? And doth God by that Law require the same of sinful Man, which is *naturally impossible*, when his Innocency is lost? Is not that part of the Law *pass'd into a Sentence* on Man, as Guilty in that respect? Or did the Law require Man to Repent before he had Sinned? Or when Christ was made under the Law, was the Man Christ obliged to Repent of Sin, who was without Sin? Yet supposing a Creature to have Sinned, they will not deny but the Law requires him to Repent of it. But granting the Law of Nature to be perfect in its kind, as a Rule of Righteousness; and it still requires no less of Fallen Man, than perfect Obedience for time to come; yet when it cannot answer those great Ends for which it was given to Man at first; will it not shew great Inconsideration for any to Conceit, that a Law of Grace cannot be annex'd to it, but it would imply imperfection in the Law, or in the Law-giver?

Q. 36. Whether there be not such a thing as *Evangelical Obedience*; that is, sincere Obedience to all known Divine Precepts, *from Faith* in, and *Love to God*, and Christ, as our Redeemer? And whether it is the *Law of Nature*, or the *Gospel*, that *primarily and properly* requires such Obedience? If the Law of it self doth not, but the Gospel doth require it, then will it not follow that the *Gospel is a Law*? And that it is not true, That the Redeemer hath no Law, but the Law of Nature, or the Moral Law?

Q. 37. Whether this sincere Evangelical Obedience be not an *Article of the Covenant*, *Gen. 4. 7. with Chap. 17. 1.* (As the Covenant of Grace not only requires Faith, but (if there be time) the Obedience of Faith also, *Gal. 5. 6. with 1 Cor. 7. 19.*) Is there any *keeping Covenant* without such Obedience? *Psal. 25. 10. Isa. 38. 3.* Whether is not such Obedience a *Condition unto which* Salvation is promised, *Heb. 5. 9. Rev. 22. 14.* and *without which* it is not promised: But the contrary is threatned, *Mat. 7. 21. 2 Thess. 1. 8.* And whether doth not this prove the Gospel or Covenant of Grace *Conditional*? Would the Law, which requires no less than perfect, sinless Obedience, and threatneth Death in case of any defect therein; yet withal, promise Life and Salvation to sincere Obedience, though imperfect, and far short of what it requires upon pain of Death: Then how can such pretend to *set Gospel-Holiness*, and Obedience *on the right Basis*, who deny, that Christ, the Redeemer, hath any other Law than the Law of Nature, or the Moral Law?

Q. 38. Whether such as deny, that the Gospel hath any *Precepts of its own*, must not consequently deny that there are any *Sins properly against the Gospel*? (Where there is no Law there is no Transgression.) And then will it not follow, that Unbelief, or *rejecting Christ offer'd* is no Sin against the Gospel? And whether is not this contrary to *John 12. 48. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, &c.* And *Chap. 15. 22. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin, but, &c.*

Q. 39. When Man had violated the Law of Innocency, whether it was not wholly of the good Will and Pleasure of God (the offended Party) to admit of a Mediator, and to accept of Satisfaction by a Mediator for us Sinners; and whether (in like manner) it was not wholly of the good Will and Pleasure of Christ, the Son of God, to undertake the Work and Office of a Mediator, without Sinners having any hand therein, or once thinking of, or desiring such a thing? And consequently, Whether it did not properly belong to God, and our Mediator, to determine upon what Terms Sinners should have an Interest in Christ, his mediatory Righteousness, and Satisfaction to their Justification and Salvation?

Q. 40. Whether the Design of the Gospel be only to exalt the Free Grace of God, and the Merit of Christ? Is it not also to declare his Justice, in that he would not Pardon and Save Sinners, without so full and compleat Satisfaction as that of Christ our Mediator, who was obedient even unto the Death of the Cross, and became a Sacrifice for us? Is it not also to declare his Holiness and Hatred of Sin? And were it so that he should Pardon impenitent, obstinate Sinners, would it be no Blemish to his Government? Would it not encourage Sinners to go on in their Trespases? Would it be no dishonour to his Free Grace, and his Sons Merits, thus to prostitute them (as it were) to Sinners Lusts?

Q. 41. If the Gospel, or Gospel-Covenant be Absolute, without any Terms or Condition, then how is it a Covenant? As Dr. Owen, on *Heb. Vol. 3. p. 222.* Every Covenant that is proposed unto Men, and accepted by them, requires somewhat to be performed on their part, otherwise it is no Covenant. And two Pages before, p. 220. (speaking of the First Promise given unto our First Parents immediately after the Fall) This (saith he) had in it the Nature of a Covenant grounded on a Promise of Grace, and requiring Obedience in all that received the Promise. And Dr. Sibbs (*Evang. Sacrifices*, Par. 2. p. 180. speaking of the Nature of the Covenant, says) There must be Consent on both sides, or else the Covenant cannot hold: There are Indentures drawn between God and us.—There is a mutual Engagement then in the Covenant: So that sound Gospel Preacher. Then if the Gospel-Covenant requires nothing on Mans part, can Believers be said to be in Covenant with God? Or whether must not they that exclude all Terms, Conditions, from the Covenant of Grace, suppose, and hold, that besides the Covenant of Redemption made with Christ, not with Man; there is only the Co-

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venant of Works? And if requiring any Terms or Condition would make the Gospel-Covenant a Covenant of Works, then will it not follow that God *never did, nor can make* with Man any other, than a *Covenant of Works?* Can that be properly a Covenant, which *wants the Form* of a Covenant? And where there are no Articles, is not the Form of a Covenant thus wanting?

Q. 42. Whether *Heb. 8. 10. &c.* gives us a full Account of the Gospel-Covenant? (I remember, Dr. Owen (for one) will not grant that). Whether the main Scope of the Apostle there be not to shew the *Excellency of the New Covenant* above that former Covenant, whereof *Moses* was Mediator; as being *established upon* (or with) *better Promises?* Whether it was necessary, that there should be express mention of all that belongs to the Gospel-Covenant in this place, where the Apostle is proving what he had said, *Ver. 6.* And though the *Terms and Conditions* are not here *express'd*, yet whether are they not *implied?* As who are we to understand by [*the House of Israel,*] with whom this Covenant is made? Whether are they not the *spiritual Seed of Abraham*, the Company of the Faithful, true Believers, whether they be *Jews or Gentiles?* And if that Promise, *Ver. 10. I will write my Law in their Mind* — be a Promise of the First Grace, whether it be not made to the *House of Israel*, the true Church. which she may plead for a *Succession of Believers*, that she shall not be *left Childless*; but a new Generation of faithful Souls shall be springing up from Age to Age, though no individual Person in an *unconverted State* can directly lay claim to this Promise, as certainly included in it? Yet whether this same Promise may not contain more in it than a giving of the First Grace, even a clearer, fuller, and deeper Inscription of his Laws in the Minds and Hearts of Believers; so that they shall keep his Covenant and his Testimonies, and be still owned for God's People; not like those, *Ver. 9. who continued not in his Covenant*, whereupon he regarded them not? And whether here also it be not implied, that *Obedience to his Laws*, is required of such as are in Covenant with him? Who are they that keep his Covenant? Are they not *such as remember his Commandments to do them?* *Psal. 103. 8.* And whether to assert, That *Remission of Sins is absolutely promised*, because no Terms are expressed here, *ver. 12.* (I say) Whether that would not be a *contradicting*, and *subverting of the Gospel?* What is more plain in the Gospel, than that there is no *Justification of a Sinner but by Faith*, no *Pardon without Repentance?* Will not these things prove more implied, and to be understood, than is expressed? As Dr. Sibb observes the like upon *Gen. 17. 7.* (*ut supra*, p. 116, 117.) Lastly, You have the *Condition of the Covenant*, and that, though it is not *express'd*, yet it is *implied*: [*I will be thy God* —] therefore thou shalt take me for thy God — It is usual in other places of Scripture, where mention is made of this Covenant, to imply the Condition required on our parts — This is the Condition on our part, that we make with God in this Covenant, to take him for our God, to be his People, and his Peculiar ones.

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Q. 43. Whether the Gospel which the Apostles were commanded to preach to every Creature, i. e. to every Man in the World (so far as they were in a Capacity) Mark 16. 15, 16. doth not promise Salvation to all, and every one that heareth it, upon Condition of their believing and sincere entering into Covenant (as it also threatneth Condemnation to every one of them, who shall finally continue in Unbelief?) Whether this be not the most plain and obvious Sense of Christ's Command, and Commission given to his Apostles there? And whether every Minister of the Gospel is not bound by his Office to offer Christ to all his Hearers upon those Terms? Or may we admit of this, as the full sense of the words [He that believeth — shall be saved]; and so of that other Text [John 3. 16. — That whosoever believeth in him shall not Perish, but have everlasting Life] That they import no more than this, viz. There is a certain number of Persons, whom God will infallibly bring on to Faith, and to Salvation; that all Men must be told of this (whether it concern them or no) without any offer of Pardon and Life to them, upon Condition of their Believing in Christ? Whether this be not in effect to deny, that the Gospel makes any offer of Christ and his Saving Benefits to Sinners? If they say, Christ must be offered to Sinners indefinitely, must it not be either upon Terms (as v. 9. upon their Repenting and Believing on him) or without Terms that he is offered? If Christ and his Saving Benefits is to be offered to Sinners without any Terms, then may not all that have him so offer'd, look upon him as their own, without any more ado? Yea, must they not do so, unless they look on such an offer of Christ, as a mocking them? If he is not to be offer'd but upon such Terms as before, will not this prove the Gospel, or Gospel-Covenant Conditional?

Q. 44. If [He that believeth shall be Saved] be not a Promise of Salvation unto all, and every one that hear it, upon Condition, that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; whether would it not tend to delude and deceive Men? What Man that is not wedded to his Opinion, and resolv'd to hold his own Conclusion (right, or wrong) would understand the Apostle otherwise, Rom. 10. 9. If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine Heart — thou shalt be Saved?

Q. 45. Whether the absolute Promise of God's giving the First Grace be of equal Extent with the Conditional Promises of the Gospel? Whether a Minister of the Gospel hath a like Warrant to declare to all, and every one of his Hearers, that God hath absolutely promised to give that Grace to every one of them, whereby they shall Believe and Repent; as he hath warrant to tell every one of them, If thou, and thou, &c. dost truly Repent and Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, thou shalt be Saved? Whether the Apostle Peter did not offer the Conditional Promise to Simon Magus, when he could not say, that he was one included in the absolute Promise? Yea, suppose an Apostle had by special Revelation been assur'd, that such a Sinner was an Elect Person (as it was reveal'd to Ananias, that Saul was a Chosen Vessel, Acts 9. 15.) Yet might

might he not have said to such a one, *except thou repentest thou shalt perish*? Or suppose he had the greatest Assurance imaginable, that such and such were sincere Christians, sound Believers; yet should he not have let such know, that *if they draw back*, the Lord would cast them out of his Favour? According to *Heb. 10. 38*. And whether doth it not thus appear, that the Gospel hath Conditions? As when we find Pardon and Life promised, but upon such Conditions, not otherwise; can it ever be proved, that the *Law of Nature of it self* admits of any such Conditions? And as to the *absolute Promises*, though Sinners may thence take Encouragement to make Suit to God for that First Grace: And 'tis some ground of Hope, that such may be included in them, who are waiting for that Grace in a diligent Use of God's appointed means; yet the Elect cannot know they have an Interest in those Promises till it appears by the Effect: Then can any say, that Sinners in general, and every one in particular, are *bound to believe*, that God hath *absolutely promised* to give them that Grace, whereby they shall Believe and Repent? Will Sinners believing this make the absolute Promise their own? But whether do not the *Conditional Promises include all*, and every Sinner, to whom the Gospel is sent? Whether have they not all a *Conditional Right* to Pardon and Life by these Promises? And whether are not every one of them *bound to believe* so much, that if they truly Repent and Turn to God, their Sins shall be blotted out; that if they Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they shall be Saved?

Q. 46. When some say, that the *Grace of God hath provided all, whole Salvation for lost Souls* in general, (without using any Limitation or Restriction to the Elect) *as excluding any Terms, Condition, or Qualification* required on their part; whether must it not necessarily follow that *lost Souls can no way possible fall short*, or miss of all, whole Salvation so provided for them? For how can there be *any failure on their part*, of whom nothing is required? Or *on God's part*, whose Grace has provided all, whole Salvation for them? So will it not follow that *there is no place left for that*: *Phil. 2. 12. Work out your own Salvation*— And then, how can such clear themselves of the *sixth Antinomian Error*, which the *Congregational Ministers* in their Declaration oppose, *viz. That they must do no good Work, or Duty, for their own Benefit, nor with an Eye unto their own Salvation*?

Q. 47. When it is said by some again, that *Christ is ready, and a Justifying Righteousness ready*, and these are *ours*, upon no Condition but Acceptance: Does it not deserve Explanation, what is meant by Acceptance here? Whether a receiving Christ in all his Offices? And whether is it not a *Contradiction* to admit of this Condition of Acceptance, and yet to deny, that the Gospel hath any Condition? And whether the *justifying Righteousness* spoken of, be not the *meritorious Righteousness* and satisfaction of Christ, which is *proper to him, as Mediator*. And whether that Righteousness which is essential to him, can be *our personal, formal Righteousness*? Or whether it can possibly be ours in the

the same sense as it is his? Or whether we are justified for his meritorious Righteousness *only as 'tis imputed to us*? And if only as imputed to us, then by what Law or Constitution (as before *Q. 34.*) can it be by the *Law of Works*, which requires our own personal Righteousness and Obedience in full Perfection? If not; then must it not be by the Gospel-Constitution, that the Righteousness of our Mediator comes to be imputed to us? And then will not this prove it a Law, a Law *constituens jus*, as hereby, upon our receiving Christ, we have a Title to, an Interest in him and his justifying Righteousness?

Q. 48. Whether this is *preaching the Gospel, as Christ commanded, and as his Apostles practised, to tell Men, that Faith, which is the same with having, receiving, accepting Christ, and his Benefits is provided, and tendered in the Gospel: but preaching the Terms of a Law of Grace is nothing but preaching a Covenant of Works*? If the *Form of a Covenant* is wanting, where there are no Terms, whether hence it does not follow, that God can make no Covenant with Man, but it must be a Covenant of Works (as was noted before, *Q. 41.*) Again, when it is said by the same, *we must offer Christ and his Benefits freely upon no Condition at all, but having, &c.* If any Condition be granted here, is it not giving up the point in Controversy? But is *having Christ* and his Benefits the Condition, and only thing required to our *having them*? But must we tell all Men, that this Faith is provided and tender'd to them in the Gospel; or else we do not preach the Gospel as Christ commanded, and the Apostles preached it? Where may we find that *Christ hath purchased, provided saving, justifying Faith* for all, to whom Christ and his Benefits are to be offered; or that this was the Doctrine of the Apostles, published to the World by Christ's Command?

Q. 49. Whether (besides what Christ hath merited and purchased for the Elect in special) was not the *satisfaction of Christ of sufficient Value* to procure a *General or Conditional Pardon* for all and every Sinner, to whom Christ is offer'd in the Gospel, That *whosoever believeth in him, shall receive the Remission of Sins*, Acts 10. 43. Otherwise what ground is there for the Ministers of the Gospel to offer Christ and his Benefits to all that hear them? Whether they are not to let Sinners know so much, that if they perish, 'tis not meerly for the violation of the *First Covenant* that God made with Man, or for their not having yielded perfect, sinless Obedience; nor is it for this cause that they themselves are not able to satisfy God's Justice for the Offences they have been guilty of; nor for this cause, that the *Satisfaction* which Christ the Redeemer hath given, no more concerneth them (if *non-elect* Persons) than it concerneth the Devils themselves: But the true cause of their perishing is their own inexcusable, wilful, wicked, ungrateful Neglect, or Refusal of the most Sovereign Remedy provided in Christ, and offer'd in the Gospel; or their not submitting unto, but rejecting the *gracious Terms*, whereon Christ with his Saving Benefits is offer'd to them? And whether that can be *sound Doctrine*, and consonant to the Word of Reconciliation

tion committed to the Ministers of the Gospel, (2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.) to teach, that the offers of the Gospel belong only to the Elect, or those included in the absolute Promises? Or that there are *no Terms* whereon Pardon and Life are offer'd to Sinners in general (whether Elect, or Non-elect) but that all, who are not included in the Absolute Promises, are wholly *left without Remedy to the violated Law of Innocency?*

Q. 50. Whether it be a thing *repugnant to the Wisdom and Goodness* of God, to promise Pardon and Life to Sinners for Christ's Sake, *upon Condition* that they believe on him, when they cannot believe of themselves without his special Grace? Though that *special Grace* be vouchsafed only to a *select number*, yet whether the Condition required be *naturally impossible*, that Sinners cannot perform, though they would? Whether it be not *meerly from a perversity* of their Will, that they do not believe, which is no Excuse (They cannot come to Christ, because they will not). And whether the Lord is not greatly *before hand* with Sinners that are priviledg'd with the Gospel, vouchsafing them much means, and that *common Grace* whereby they might do much more than they do towards their Conversion, and the obtaining of Saving Faith? As Dr. Owen of the *Holy Spirit*, p. 198. Where *special Grace*, and real Conversion is not attain'd, it is always from the *Interposuion of an Act of Wilfulness* and Stubborness in those Inlightned and Convicted. They do not sincerely *improve what they have received*, and faint, not meerly for want of Strength to proceed; but by a *free Act of their own Wills*, they *refuse the Grace* which is further tender'd unto them in the Gospel. And Dr. Sibbs's, *Christ's Exaltation*, p. 116, 117. There must be waiting upon God in his Ordinances, till we find Ability to Holy Duties. And those that have so much Patience to honour God and Christ, so far as to attend in the use of good Means, till the *Good Hour come*, till the Spirit come to subject their Spirits to Duty; no doubt but God intends well to them — But those that are so short-spirited — 'tis just with God to leave them to themselves. And Mr. Fer. Burroughes's, *Saints Happiness*, p. 337. — What can we do without the Grace of God? But know, that God doth give thee some *common Grace*, which would inable thee to do more than thou dost: But thou dost not put forth that Strength which thou mightest do, by the Power of common Grace — Dare you venture your eternal State upon this Plea? You say, you do what you can, &c.

Q. 51. Why is the Ministry of the Gospel called the *Ministration of the Spirit*, (2 Cor. 3. 8.) Does it not intimate, that the Spirit is wont in a special manner to accompany it? And where the Spirit begins to awaken and convince Sinners, and is striving with them, to promote the Work of their Conversion; can it ever be proved, that he gives over striving, and gives them up to themselves, till they provoke him, by neglecting to make use of his Help offer'd, or rejecting his Counsel, and quenching his sweet Motions, &c. Whether is not *his deserting Sinners a Judicial, Penal Act?* Prov. 1. 24. &c. *Because I have Called,*
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and ye refused—Ye have set at nought all my Counsel, &c. That where he goes not through with the Work, is it not long of themselves?

Q. 52. Whether any dare assert, That there was no Grace in God's giving his own Son, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*? Is there no Grace here, that the Condition of Fallen Man is not *equally hopeless and remediless*, as that of the Fallen Angels? Whether may we not have so much Charity even for the Devils themselves, that they would not think *there was no Grace*, if they had a Pardon and Release from their Punishment offer'd, upon any Terms, that were not purely, naturally impossible? Is there no Grace in God's offering Christ, and Pardon and Life with him, and following Sinners with loud Calls, earnest Invitations, and the Motions of his Spirit; thus bringing Salvation to Sinners choice, that if they fall short of it, they cannot lay the blame on God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, but must take it on themselves; for which their own Consciences will for ever Condemn and Torment them? May we not conclude, that there are Multitudes now in Hell, full of Anguish for their most sinful Folly, in having *received the Grace of God in vain*, and having neglected so great Salvation as was offered in the Gospel? *Is common Grace no Grace*? And whether may any one stand to, and abide by this, That the *Conditional Promises make the Redemption and Satisfaction of Christ a very poor thing*; and that a *Conditional Offer is a Graceless Gospel*, and that it *can never Save any one Soul of Mankind*; when as (though of it self it cannot, yet) by this very means the Lord is wont to Convert and Save Souls? As we read of Thousands converted by it, *Acts 2. 38, 39, 41*. Was it an *Absolute Gospel* that the Apostle Peter preached there? Was it not a *Conditional Gospel* that the Apostle Paul preached to the Jailor, by which he was brought in to Christ, *Acts 16. 31*.

Q. 53. Whether such as are against Gospel-Terms, or a *Conditional Covenant*, by consequence must not hold, that Christ *purchased Redemption for all Absolutely*, when they cannot deny but his Ministers are to offer him, and his Saving Benefits to all (as far as they are able)? And whether it will not follow, either that *all must be Saved*, or that Christ *loseth a part of his Purchase*, even so great a part as are not Saved? So if Grace be *Absolutely promised to all*, unto whom the Gospel comes, (as with some, the Gospel is only the Absolute, excluding the Conditional Promises) then whether will it not follow, that *either all that have the Gospel must have Grace with it* (understand the *Grace of the Absolute Promise*) or that God (*who cannot Lie*) faileth of his Word, doth not make good his Promise?

Q. 54. Notwithstanding God's promising, and giving that Grace to some, whereby they are enabled to Repent and Believe; yet whether these are not *their own free Acts*, and the Condition of subsequent Blessings? When a Sinner comes to Believe and Repent, are not these *his own Acts* (though not performed of himself, without the Help of special Grace)? Will any of a sober Mind say, that it is God, or the Holy Spirit

Spirit that believeth, or repenteth in him? Should not Men distinguish betwixt the *Spirits working* in a Soul to its Conversion, and the *Souls acting* and turning to God by the powerful, gracious Influence of the Spirit? So is it not plain, that God hath promised to put his Fear in the Hearts of his People, Jer. 32. 40. and to cause them to walk in his Statutes, Ezek. 36. 27. And yet is it not as plain, that he hath made many gracious Promises to such as fear him, and walk in his Statutes?

Q. 55. Whether it can be sound Doctrine, to deny any commanding, obliging Power of the Gospel (Tit. 2. 11, 12.) antecedent to its effectual Teaching (that is, as I understand it, before its saving Efficacy on Souls)? Like that under Q. 26. *It gives Faith and Repentance, as its Blessings, and then requires them as Duties.* And yet whether it will not follow hereupon, and they that so teach, must they not grant, that the Gospel is a Law to Believers, who have Faith given them, and who are effectually taught by the Gospel?

Q. 56. Whether Christ, in what he did and suffered for our Redemption and Salvation, is not to be looked on as a Mediator, not as strictly, and properly our Surety? Whether Christ was bound in the self-same Bond with Man? Or was he not bound in a special Bond by himself in the Covenant of Redemption, the Law of Mediation, whereof his fulfilling the Law of Innocency was but a part, not the whole, that was required of him? Whether the Law of Works required the same Person to yield perfect, sinless Obedience, and also to suffer, as if he had broken the Law? And whether the Law of Works was not positive and absolute, [Thou shalt obey perfectly in all things, or thou shalt undergo the Punishment due to thy Disobedience]. Or will any say, That the Tenor of it was Disjunctive, thus, [Either thou shalt do so, or another for thee, as thy Surety?]. Or was it not an Act of God (the Law-giver) as above his own Law, when Man had sinned, and the Law said, *The Soul that sinneth shall die*; yet graciously to admit of a Mediator to make Satisfaction, that the Law might not have its full force against us?

Q. 57. Whether such must not suppose, and hold, that Christ was in a strict, proper sense our Surety in the Covenant of Works, who plainly assert, That we are justified by the Law (upon account of Christ's Righteousness) as an Act of Justice?

Q. 58. Then whether will it not necessarily follow, that there is nothing of pardoning Grace, no Remission of Sins in our Justification? And whether this be at all a-kin to Gospel-Truth, or concordant to Eph. 1. 7. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins.* And Chap. 4. 32. — *Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* If another be bound in the same Bond with me, and he (my Surety) pays the full Debt for me; whether can the Creditor be said to forgive the Debt to me, or to remit any part of it? And if we obeyed perfectly in Christ, as our Surety, and fully satisfied God's Justice in and by Christ our Surety (though the former of these supposed; the latter, to wit, Christ's Satisfaction would be needless) then will it not follow, that there is no forgiving

Queries to such as deny the Gospel-Law.

forgetting us our Sins for his Names-sake? Yea, if the Law of Works took in Christ, as our Surety, in this form, *either Thou, or thy Surety, &c.* will it not follow, that the Law is fulfilled, it was all that the Law required, that only one, not both of us should be obliged to such Terms? Then if we are justified by the Law, where is the Grace that the Gospel speaks of in Sinners Justification? *Justified freely by his Grace, &c.*

Q. 59. Whether one that holds, we are justified by the Law, as an Act of Justice, must not be an Antinomian in Principle (whether he own it, or no.) If he looks upon himself as justified by Law, for the Righteousness of Christ, his Surety, which Righteousness is fully commensurate to the Law, as broad, as large, as deep, as long, and every way answerable thereto; whether will it not follow, that he may look on himself, as no more obliged by the Law, or owing no more Obedience to it, having perfectly obeyed the Law, and fully satisfied for any former, or future breach of it, in Christ his Surety?

Q. 60. Whether one that holds Justification to be an Act of God's Free Grace to Sinners, in which he pardoneth all their Sins, accepteth and accounteth their Persons righteous in his Sight, not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect Obedience and full Satisfaction of Christ (as the only Legal, or Pro-legal Righteousness, they have to plead) by God imputed to them, and received by Faith alone, (as the only receptive Condition, or federal Instrument). I say, whether such a one is justly reputed, and reported to be unsound, corrupt in the great Point of Justification?

FINIS.

